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JOHN SEBASTIAN BACH

Great Composers and Their Work

By

Louis C. Elson

Author of "Curiosities of Music," "European Reminiscences," "The Theory of Music," etc.

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GREAT COMPOSERS AND THEIR WORK.

CHAPTER I.

PRELIMINARY — THE OLD FLEMISH SCHOOL.

Composers, in the modern sense of the word, could only come into being after music had changed from a very free art into a science which admitted of rules, and which it was possible to teach. There was, to be sure, a certain order of progressions demanded in the old melodies which charmed the ancient world, but, as all the music was probably melodic, as there were no chords or combinations of parts, such men as Sophocles or Euripides, who set their tragedies

to music, such reformers as Saint Ambrose or Saint Gregory, who evolved set progressions of melody, and such enthusiastic bard-musicians as the old Troubadours or Minnesingers could scarcely be called "composers," even though they were famous in music.

It was a little before the year 1000 that the combination of different musical parts into a harmonious whole began to be studied as a science. The first results were not exactly what we should call harmonious, however. Guido of Arezzo, Hucbald of St. Amands, and a number of others were engaged during the tenth and eleventh centuries in producing some of the most hideous music that civilized ears were ever forced to listen to, — a continuous succession of fourths and fifths.

Probably the first party who fairly deserves the name of a musical composer was a Frenchman, a Trouvêre (as the Trouba-

dours of north France were called), named Adam de la Hale. This very sensible musician started out with a theory that had been enunciated about fifteen hundred years before his day (he was born in the thirteenth century) by Aristoxenos. The theory was that "whatever sounded right was good music."

Working on this principle, he produced music that was fairly harmonious, and far in advance of the cacophony that had preceded his efforts. But he could not impart his knowledge to others; he had, in fact, not a single rule which he could teach to a pupil; had he been familiar with Tennyson, he would have answered those who sought his science with —

> "I do but sing because I must,
> And pipe but as the linnets sing."

In short, he was a "natural musician," who allowed his ear and good taste to guide him

on unknown seas. It is unpleasant to have to record that this first composer was a good deal of a vagabond. He was probably born at Arras, and was known as "Le Bossu d'Arras" ("The hunchback of Arras"), but, as he himself informs us that he was not deformed, we are forced to believe that the deformity hinted at lay not in his physical, but in his moral nature. One of his musical works shows this obliquity; it is called "Le Jeu d'Adam," and is a play (an incipient opera) founded upon his matrimonial infelicities, and in it he takes delight in holding up his own wife to the ridicule of the world.

The music play upon which his chief fame rests is called "Robin et Marion," and is the first of French operas, chronologically speaking. It was probably written for the court of Naples, then a French court, and its plot is not very different from some of the light French operas of more modern times. Robin, a shepherd, loves Marion, a shep-

herdess, but the lord of the village has seen Marion, and wants her for himself. He therefore gives Robin a good beating, and drives him away. Marion is more courageous than her swain, and when his lordship endeavors to set her on his horse she scratches and bites with such good will that he goes away discomfited. Robin comes back full of gasconades of what he was going to do, but, as he sees the noble returning, his boasting suddenly dwindles, and again he proves discretion the better part of valor by a hasty exit. The end is a happy one; the lord of the village comes to the conclusion that Marion is too much of a termagant for him, that the grapes are very sour, and Robin is permitted to marry the woman of his choice. At the end, as in a modern opera, the chorus come in, just as they are wanted, with wedding gifts, fat geese, sausages, etc., and the opera ends with a general merrymaking. Beyond the

opera, and the few facts cited, there is little known of this Adam of musical composition.

He had, however, put the leaven into the meal; after his works music could hardly go back to the dry succession of fourths and fifths, and men began to search for rules for the new science which Jean de Muris, a doctor of the University of Paris in the fourteenth century, soon called "counterpoint," from the fact that "point" (or note) was written against "point."

England, at this early time, seems to have produced composers of much merit, but they were chiefly in the monasteries, and modestly withheld their names from the public. A mysterious English figure looms up at the very beginning of the fifteenth century, — a man who won esteem in continental Europe, who wrote celebrated compositions (which have almost entirely disappeared), who produced a book on music (also lost), a table of musical intervals (Morley says "Dunstable

made a musical dunce-table"), and wrote a geographical tract which still exists. For the rest, we only know that this English composer was also a mathematician and an astrologer. He died in 1458. Morley (who wrote in 1595) might truly have added to his play of words the fact that the reputation of Dunstable was remarkably unstable, for he is one of the haziest figures among the early composers.

We have now reached the epoch when an entire race of composers came upon the scene. They arose in what is now Belgium, and formed the School of the Netherlands, or the "Flemish School." The first of their line, William Dufay, has been called "The Father of Music," and in one sense deserves that title, since he was the first skilful composer. He was born at Chimay about the year 1400, according to the researches of the learned Father F. X. Haberl. He was in Rome about 1428, became canon of Cam-

bray, in the Flemish country, about 1450, and died there Nov. 27, 1474. It is noteworthy that nearly all the Flemish composers seem to have been called into Italy by the Catholic Church, and nearly all of them seem to have returned to their native country in their old age. This early school of composition loved intricacy and complexity; the composers treated music very much as if it had been mathematics, and their compositions seem dry and utterly without emotion to modern ears. Yet they must have felt a degree of inspiration in working in the new art. Dufay requested in his last illness that after he had received extreme unction, and the final agony had set in, a choir should gather around his bed and sing his "Ave Regina," a proposition which he defeated by dying suddenly in the midst of the night. It was sung in the chapel at his obsequies, however.

It would be next to impossible, in a short

work, to give even the names of the composers who won distinction in the Flemish school. John Ockhegem (also spelled "Ockenheim"), who was in the service of Louis XI., and died about 1513, was the first teacher of composition of any renown. But the bright particular star among the composers of the fifteenth century was Josquin Des Près (Josquin, or "Jossekyn," being a Flemish diminutive meaning "Johnnie"), who died either in 1515 or in 1521. Martin Luther said of him, "Other composers are ruled by notes, but Des Près rules the notes." Des Près is the first of the skilful composers who allows something of emotion to enter into his work. At this time music was so entirely intellectual that some of the subjects chosen for treatment would astonish a modern; the genealogy of Christ, for example, was set to music more than once. Des Près was a good teacher as well as the first composer of genius that the world possessed.

charm away his troubles with beautiful music. Before the composer could reach Paris the king was dead, and Di Lasso retraced his steps to Munich. The last years of his life were, however, very discontented, for Duke Albert was dead, and the old composer, the spoiled child of Fortune, imagined that he was slighted by every one because there was no longer the exaggerated homage of the "good old times." He died in Munich in 1594, and his epitaph gives a very good example of a Latin pun; it runs —

"Hic ille est Lassus, lassum qui recreat orbem,"

which is but half translated by "Here lies aweary, he who a weary world refreshed."

To illustrate the esteem in which the composer was held even by the common people, it may be here stated that the populace of Munich believed that Di Lasso's setting of "Gustate et Videte" had the power to cause

stormy weather to clear and the sun to shine through the clouds.

The Flemish school had lasted nearly two centuries, and had brought forth about three hundred composers of more or less fame, but the last and greatest of all these was Orlando di Lasso.

1400 – 1600

CHAPTER II.

THE OLD ITALIAN COMPOSERS — PALESTRINA.

THERE was born in the fifteenth century a composer who was a connecting link between the Flemish school and the old Italian school of composition. Adrian Willaert was born in 1480 in Bruges, in Flanders, and, as was usual with the Flemish composers, he went to Rome as a young man. Here he was unpleasantly surprised by hearing one of his own motettes given as a composition of Josquin des Près. On his proving the authorship, the papal singers laid aside the work altogether, and Des Près left Rome in a very disgusted state. He finally settled in Venice, and became the organist of St.

Mark's Cathedral there. At this cathedral, and largely because of Willaert, a school of organ music was born, the earliest school of advanced instrumental music. Willaert had many Italian pupils, and in his later years a number of German students came to Venice to study the mode of composition and of organ-playing taught there. Willaert was the first to demonstrate that the musical scale ought to be tuned in twelve equal semitones, a mode of tuning that was practically introduced much later by Bach. He died in 1562, leaving behind him a host of talented pupils, among whom one can mention Cyprian de Rore, Zarlino, Scheidt, Praetorius, Scheidemann, Hassler, Andrea Gabrieli, and especially the famous Giovanni Gabrieli, one of the greatest lights of the early Italian school. All of these were either directly students with Willaert, or were taught by his pupils, and can, therefore, be called disciples of his school.

Meanwhile Rome was not idle. Venice had developed the art of organ-playing, and had taught even Germany in this field; Rome applied herself rather to the vocal forms. Costanza Festa was, perhaps, the pioneer of this school. He was not a very great composer, but was fortunate in being the first Italian to achieve especial renown in composition. He was one of the artificial singers of the Pope's choir, was born in Florence, and died in 1545.

Now there comes upon the scene the first really great composer of contrapuntal music that the world had as yet produced.

Giovanni Pierluigi da Palestrina received his last name from the town of Palestrina, where he was born, probably in 1524, although there is still much controversy as to the date of his birth. The lad was of humble parentage, and as the Duke of Alva's soldiers destroyed the parish records of Palestrina, it is scarcely probable that the exact

date of the birth of this first great composer of the world will ever be known. He became singing-master to the boys at the Vatican, on his arrival in Rome, and in 1544 wrote and published a set of masses, dedicated to Pope Julius III. This was a work which may justly be called epoch-making; it was the first great musical work created by an Italian composer, it heralded the appearance of a rival to the Flemish school, which had been leading music into a bog of intricacies and complexities.

Pope Julius, as a reward, appointed Palestrina one of the papal singers, a violation of one of the canons of the church, since these singers were prohibited from marrying, and Palestrina had already entered the bonds of wedlock. There was no very great pay attached to the position, but even this stipend was suddenly stopped by the death of Pope Julius, and the subsequent demise of Marcellus, who was well-disposed towards

Palestrina, after being Pope for twenty-three days. The haughty and imperious churchman, John Peter Carrafa, now became Pope under the title of Paul IV., and began a series of stringent reforms in all clerical matters. Palestrina was at once dismissed, with an annuity of six scudi a month. It shows the great modesty of this composer that he thought that his career was ruined by the loss of his position; he was broken-hearted for a time, believing that his dependent family must now starve, and took to his bed with a nervous fever that nearly cut short his career at the very beginning. The composer of the first great Italian masses was too great, however, to sink into obscurity because of any papal dismissal, and the same year (1555) finds him appointed director of music at the Lateran church. In 1561 he became director of the music at S. Maria Maggiore, where he remained ten years.

In 1562 Palestrina became the saviour of the music of the Catholic Church. The reforms of Paul IV. extended far beyond the purification of his own choir; he began the task of reforming all the evils that had crept into clerical affairs. The reformation headed by Luther had gained enormous headway; the reformers were thundering at the gates of the citadel of the Church itself; Paul IV. began a counter-reformation, and the great Council of Trent was called together to formulate measures to abolish the vices that had grown like ivy upon the oak.

The music of the Church came up for discussion at the twenty-second sitting of the Council, September 11, 1562. Composers, especially of the Flemish school, had displayed their skill at the expense of all religious feeling; in those days the tenor voice took the melody, while the other voices supported the central theme with most intricate counterpoint. To demonstrate their

skill the composers often took a secular melody for the tenor part, sometimes without even changing the words. Therefore, one might sometimes hear the air and even the words of a drinking song in the tenor voice, while the others were singing "Kyrie Eleison," or "Gloria in Excelsis." The self-display of the musicians had gone so far that the cardinals were disposed to wipe the musical progress of three centuries out of existence and return to the simplicity of plain chanting.

A strong battle ensued between the iconoclasts and those bishops who loved music. At the twenty-fourth sitting the Council seemed to sway towards total abolition of counterpoint, but the Emperor Ferdinand suggested that this was too radical a step. A committee of eight cardinals was then appointed with plenary powers. Fortunately, among these were two music lovers, Saint Carlo Borromeo and Vitellozzo Vitel-

lozzi. Eight singers from the papal choir were added to their ranks, and the result was that the committee determined to put the matter to a practical test. Did music obscure the meaning of the sacred words?

In 1563 Palestrina was called upon to give a practical answer to this question by writing a specimen of contrapuntal work properly wedded to the words of the mass. Ever modest and self-distrustful, he sent three masses to the committee of the Council. One of these was the ever-famous "Mass of Pope Marcellus." This was performed at the palace of Cardinal Vitellozzi, and afterwards at the Pope's chapel, before Pius IV. The Pope was in ecstasy. "It must be such music that the angels sing in the new Jerusalem," he cried; contrapuntal music was proved to be a help and not a hindrance to religious words. The mass was ordered to be inscribed in the choral

books in notes of twice the usual size, but pecuniary rewards did not follow.[1]

Palestrina soon wrote another set of masses, and dedicated them to the Spanish monarch, Philip II.; the great king sent him as return — his thanks!

The Pope now appointed Palestrina "Composer to the Pontifical Choir," with a raise of salary from six to nine dollars per month; prosperity seemed ever to deny her smiles to this composer, while every honor and benefit was showered upon his only possible rival, — Di Lasso.

Yet one may doubt whether actual poverty harassed the composer, as some writers would have us believe; his wife was said to be well-to-do, and he had the constant friendship of great cardinals, such as Vitellozzi and Borromeo, while the founder of oratorio, St. Philip Neri, was his intimate companion.

[1] Although Ambros has doubted the story of the "Mass of Pope Marcellus," the evidence supporting the above story is overwhelming.

Nor were moments of great triumph lacking; in 1575 the citizens of the town of Palestrina celebrated his jubilee, and entered Rome singing some of his compositions, while banquets and speeches of congratulation and of eulogy were showered upon the happy musician.

His chief sorrows were the deaths of his boys after he had trained them in music. The one son who outlived him was an unfilial wretch, who cared little for his father's glory.

In his later years Palestrina was appointed musical director to Cardinal Aldobrandini, and leader of the choir of St. Peter's. January, 1594, saw the publication of his last work, a set of thirty "Spiritual Madrigals," in praise of the Holy Virgin. He died a month later. He wanted other of his works published "for the Glory of God," but his careless son did not carry out his wishes.

With Palestrina music was religion; he composed in a most devout spirit, and kept to the old church modes as if they were his creed. Mendelssohn held the "Improperia" (the reproaches of Christ to his persecutors) to be Palestrina's finest work, but the "Mass of Pope Marcellus" may be regarded as his most skilful. There is considerable difference between the compositions of his first years and those of his later life. At first he copied the abstruse complexities of the Flemings, then he achieved a broader choral style, but in his riper years he combined great dignity with a florid treatment that was much less affected than the works of the Flemish school.

There were plenty of eulogies heaped upon him after he was dead. "The Light and Glory of Music," "The Prince of Music," "The Father of Music," were a few of the epithets used on his tomb and by his funeral orators. A. D. 1594 was an epoch year

in music, for the Flemish school came to its end with the death of Di Lasso, the early Italian school reached its limit with the decease of Palestrina, and the first opera, "Dafne," was composed; a new school of music had arisen upon the ruins of the old. Henceforth, in this little volume it will be impossible to speak of all the various strivings, reforms, and attainments which took place during the evolution of the great modern style of composition, and we must limit ourselves to recording the chief deeds of the greatest lights in the musical firmament. But there were two chief religious lights in the entire galaxy, both writing from deep religious impulse, both virtuous, both poor, both not fully appreciated until they had been placed under the sod. One was a Catholic, the other a Protestant. The Catholic Church has canonized a musical cardinal, Saint Carlo Borromeo, and the founder of oratorio, Saint Philip Neri, but there is not

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yet a full-fledged composer among the saints. Among the great composers, however, it may be difficult to find many good or holy enough for this honor; but Bach (who cannot be sainted because of his faith) and Palestrina would fulfil nearly all the requirements of proper sainthood.

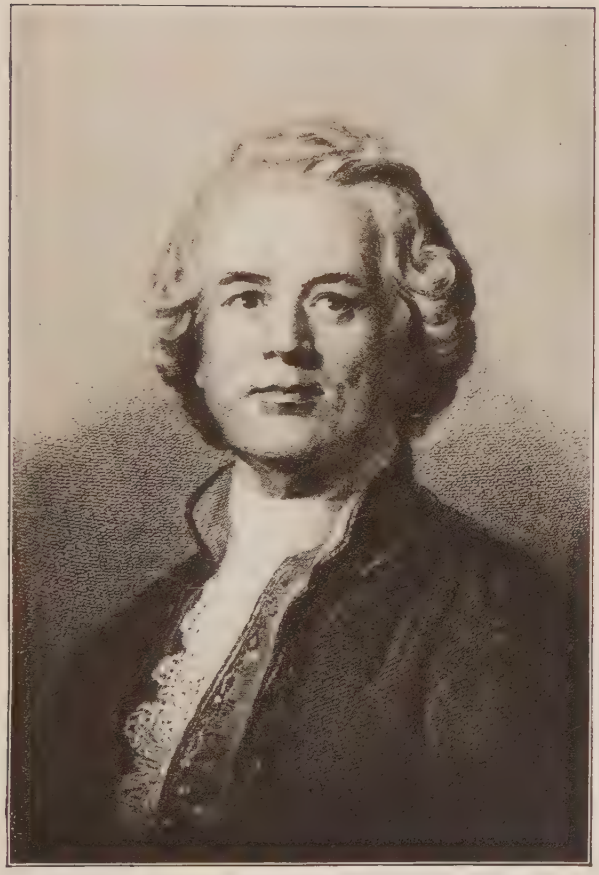
CHAPTER III.

OPERA AND ORATORIO — GLUCK — BACH — HÄNDEL.

With the death of Palestrina and Di Lasso there came a great change in music; the art, which had been growing more and more complex, suddenly was simplified, emotional expression triumphed over intellectuality, and the earliest days of operatic composition represent the reign of the amateur. Let no one underestimate the value of the amateur in art! It may be doubted whether any of the skilled composers of the Flemish or of the old Italian school could ever have brought forth what was evolved by Count Vernio, Vincenzo Galileo, Peri, Caccini, and the rest of the body of music-

lovers, who, under the title of the "Camerati," endeavored to bring back a form of art akin to the old Greek tragedies, and succeeded in bringing forth something better, calling their new musico-dramatic invention "Opera."

The world was waiting for just such an emotional expression in music, and the new school spread like wild-fire to Germany and England. It was not long before skilful composers gave their adhesion to the new style of musical construction, and such men as Monteverde, Cavalli, Alessandro Scarlatti, Pergolesi, and others, added learning to the enthusiasm of the early stages of opera. In France, under the "grand monarque," Louis XIV., and with the assistance of the great Molière, Lulli was founding a separate school of light opera; in England, Henry Purcell, the greatest composer that Great Britain ever possessed, was building a school of opera on the Italian models; in Germany



CHRISTOPH WILLIBALD VON GLUCK.

Reinhardt Keiser was establishing at Hamburg a short-lived German opera.

Such sudden changes in art generally go too far, and it was not unnatural to find the new composers forgetting the claims of poetry in their enthusiasm for music; the result was that the librettos of the operas began to be very puerile, and the music by no means always represented the meaning of the words. The new school needed a reformer; after Italian opera had ruled the world for more than a century and a half the reformer came.

GLUCK.

Christoph Willibald Gluck was born July 2, 1714, at Weidenwang, in Bohemia. As a boy he studied at the Jesuit college in Kommatau, and finally at Prague, where he also taught violin, violoncello, and singing. Now our rolling-stone passes to Milan, where he had the benefit of Sammartini's instruction,

and then goes to London, where he writes his first opera. This opera could not have been a very brilliant one, for Händel, then in England, said of its composer, "He knows no more of counterpoint than my cook!" Hamburg, Dresden, and Vienna next saw the young musician, the last-named city, where he had dwelt before, witnessing the evolution of his first theories of operatic reform. These reforms can be summed up in two chief demands: first, that music in opera should always represent the ideas expressed by the poet; and, second, that the orchestral accompaniment should be more than merely a support to the voices, and should add its colors to the picture which poet and musician were portraying. Naturally this involved a higher species of libretto than had been in vogue before, and operatic poetry became much more powerful because of the reforms of Gluck.

Almost every operatic reform rests in some

degree upon the dramatic ideas of the old Greeks as represented in their tragedies (which were sung or chanted), and Gluck used Greek subjects for almost all of his important operas. He was fortunate in finding a poet who could collaborate heartily with him, and Raniero di Calzabigi deserves a share of the credit which is awarded to the the composer. The opera of "Orpheus," which still holds the stage, was the first outcome of the reformer's theories.

There were plenty of attacks on the new school, and this eighteenth-century Wagner was obliged to defend and explain by pamphlet after pamphlet, very much as the Bayreuth reformer did in our own time. Fortune, however, seemed always to favor him, for when he subsequently went to Paris, the queen herself (Marie Antoinette) became his pupil, and, naturally, one of the loyal supporters of the new school. Jean Jacques Rousseau also became an early convert, and fought for

the operatic reform; but there were still enemies enough to make the battle an interesting one. There were plenty who believed that if music were melodic and pleasing, it had fulfilled its entire function, and not only was there a war of squib, caricature, and pamphlet, but there were numerous duels fought between the adherents of the old school and the new.

At last the combat took on a practical phase; there was an Italian, Nicolo Piccini, in Paris, who was a perfect representative of the school of mellifluous (and dramatically meaningless) Italian tune-writing, and it was suggested that the two composers prove the merits of their respective systems by setting the same subject to music. "Iphigenia in Tauris" was the topic selected, and, in 1781, in Paris, this opera, as set by Gluck and by Piccini, was performed on alternate nights. The triumph of the dramatic school was immediate and overwhelming; the very singers

became ashamed of the merely melodic setting, and, finally, the prima donna appearing upon the stage, evidently under the influence of copious libations, a Parisian wit cried out, "This is not 'Iphigenia in Tauris,' it is Iphigenia in Champagne!" and the shaft of sarcasm gave the finishing blow to the school of mere melody in opera.

Gluck died in 1787, and his works suffered a temporary eclipse because of the baleful genius of Rossini, who soon followed him. The Germans readily gave their adhesion to the principles established by Gluck; but the brilliancy of the vocal writing of Rossini set back the hands of the clock of operatic progress by about half a century. The world was obliged to wait for another reformer in the same field who should reap the harvest which Gluck had first sown, but the seed had been planted and could not be choked by any subsequent weeds. Gluck had made no concessions to popular taste, he

had followed an ideal, and had brought forth the first true dramatic operas; in his works poetry and music had for the first time been fittingly wedded; the future opera now had a firm foundation whereon to build its loftier edifice.

The end of the sixteenth century and the beginning of the seventeenth was a period of renascence in music; not only the opera sprang into being, but its sacred counterpart, the oratorio, was evolved during this important epoch. Saint Philip Neri, who has already been mentioned in connection with Palestrina, was the zealous founder of the religious opera, for such the oratorio was in its earliest stages, having costumes, acting, and stage effects as the opera has to-day. Neri began this style of performance as an elaboration of the old "miracle-plays," with which the Church used to amuse and instruct its humbler adherents, and once a week, generally Friday evenings, there was

given in his church of Santa Maria di Vallicella, a sacred performance for the benefit of the public. As these plays took place in the oratory of the church, they were soon called "Oratorios." Saint Philip Neri died in 1595, after he had planted this good seed. The standard was immediately taken by a very talented musician and composer, Emilio del Cavaliere, who brought forth a much more ambitious work in this school, called "The Representation of the Soul and the Body," which was given in Rome (in Neri's own church) in 1600, and has a good right to be classed with the earliest operas. The first opera, "Dafne," by Jacopo Peri and his companions, was performed in 1594, six years earlier than this oratorio; but Cavaliere's work was much more advanced than that of the operatic composer of this early epoch. Soon after Cavaliere's establishment of this sacred school, many great composers gave their efforts in

the same direction, but with Carissimi (1604-1680) a higher level was reached, the dramatic action began to be omitted, and oratorio, as we understand it to-day, was established. Alessandro Scarlatti, who had elevated opera, now did the same for oratorio, and Stradella also wrote in the sacred school, while in Germany, Schuetz, Keiser, and many others began to popularize the oratorio.

BACH.

There were two men born in the same year (1685) in Germany, who were to lift the sacred school to its highest possible expression. Bach and Händel are too often spoken of in musical history as if they were the Siamese twins of music. In many respects they were opposites. The points of resemblance are only these: Händel was born February 23d, Bach, March 21st, both in 1685; both were German; both left great religious works to the musical world; both

were fine organists, and both were stricken blind in their later years. Here, however, resemblance ends, for Bach was not a dramatic composer, while Händel was the most dramatic musician of his time; Bach leaned towards the old intellectual school, while Händel was essentially modern in his effects. Bach was twice married, and had an enormous family, while Händel remained a bachelor all his days; Bach was poor, Händel became rich; Bach was retiring and lived a sequestered life, while Händel loved publicity; and one might carry this list of contraries much further. It is also a mistake to consider these composers as peers, for Händel's reputation rests chiefly upon his "Messiah," while one might obliterate the great "Passion Music," and Bach would still remain the leading composer of the world in contrapuntal forms.

John Sebastian Bach came of a family that had consisted of musicians for many genera-

tions. Veit Bach, who was born about the middle of the sixteenth century, seems to have been the founder of the long line of musicians which constitute the Bach family. He was chased from Germany to Hungary and back again on account of his Protestant faith, and this sturdy Protestantism became characteristic of all the musical Bachs of later times. Bach's father and uncle were excellent musicians, and were also celebrated as being such a phenomenal pair of twins that their own wives could not easily tell them apart! The great line of Bachs, the most honorable lineage in music, became extinct as late as 1846, when Wilhelm F. E. Bach died.

Bach's parents died during his earliest years, and the orphan was obliged to live with his brother, John Christopher Bach, an organist in a small village near Weimar. This brother gave him instruction in music, but seems to have been a hard and stern

man. The young Bach had a great desire to play certain musical manuscripts which his brother owned, but was forbidden their use; by stealthy work at copying on moonlight nights (for he had no candle), he managed to transcribe the entire set, only to have them discovered and confiscated by his relative a short time after. This moonlight labor bore bad fruit later, for the blindness which came upon Bach in later life may be at least partially ascribed to this cause.

The possession of a fine soprano voice lifted the lad somewhat above the bitterness of extreme poverty, and soon brought him a choir position in Lüneberg, where he was enabled to pursue his musical studies with less harshness and to better advantage. When his voice changed he was able to obtain a position as violinist in the duke's orchestra in the city of Weimar. In 1704 he won a post much more to his liking, for he was appointed organist at Arnstadt.

Bach always enjoyed playing the organ, and, by his improvisations and his compositions, he very soon became celebrated far beyond the limits of his town, and even was known outside of the duchy of Weimar. Many cities sought to obtain him as organist, and, in 1707, in his twenty-second year, we find him organist at Mülhausen. Here he married a distant relative, of the same family name, an estimable lady who bore him seven children. It is noticeable that the children of this first marriage became the most musically gifted of all the numerous progeny of Bach, the great William Friedemann Bach and Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach being among them. Bach's wife died very suddenly, during a short tour undertaken by the composer, who left her in good health and found her buried on his return. About eighteen months later, Bach married a second time, this spouse being a fine soprano singer. He had thirteen children by his second wife,

thus having a family of twenty children, who ranged all the way from idiocy (David Bach) to genius (William Friedemann Bach). With such a family, and with the slender income of the musician in those days, it is not to be wondered at that Bach remained poor all his days, but it is none the less a disgrace to the city of Leipzig, that when the old musician died, after many years of service to the municipality, his wife was suffered to go to the poorhouse and to end her days there.

In 1714 Bach was appointed director of the court concerts in Weimar, an important position, but with so small a salary that he very soon endeavored to find a more lucrative post. It seems strange that he was unsuccessful, in his applications to Hamburg and to Halle, for the post of city organist, and all through his life was doomed to see inferior musicians win the positions which would have lifted him above pecuniary care. This, however, never soured the temper of the

patriarchal composer, who seems only to have become angry when his beloved art was treated in a flippant manner. Among all the great composers only Palestrina can be compared to Bach in purity of life, freedom from envy, and unselfish devotion to art.

Probably the pleasantest position that Bach ever obtained was that of kapellmeister to Prince Leopold of Anhalt-Köthen, which he held for six years before settling in Leipzig.

As an improviser at clavichord (the predecessor of the piano) or at organ, Bach, probably, had no equal. It was said that he could evolve a fugue as readily as others would bring forth a free improvisation. He proved this publicly, in 1717, before the king of Saxony, when, after a preliminary bout, Marchand, the great French virtuoso, ran away, rather than stand the ordeal of a regular competition with him.

In 1723 he received the most important

appointment of his life, for he was made cantor and musical director of the Thomas School, connected with the Thomas Church, in Leipzig. He held this position until his death, twenty-seven years later. The life of the composer now became an uneventful one. He lived like an ancient patriarch, surrounded by his numerous family, enjoying a modest income, composing every day, teaching, directing, a model of a musician working in art for art's sake. A few honorary titles were awarded him by some appreciative noblemen; he was held by many of his admirers to be the greatest musician of his day; but his modest income and his sequestered position were unchanged by these empty compliments.

In 1747 there was a striking proof given of the estimation in which he was held by connoisseurs. Frederick the Great was an enthusiastic flute player, and had engaged the second son of Bach (Philipp Emanuel

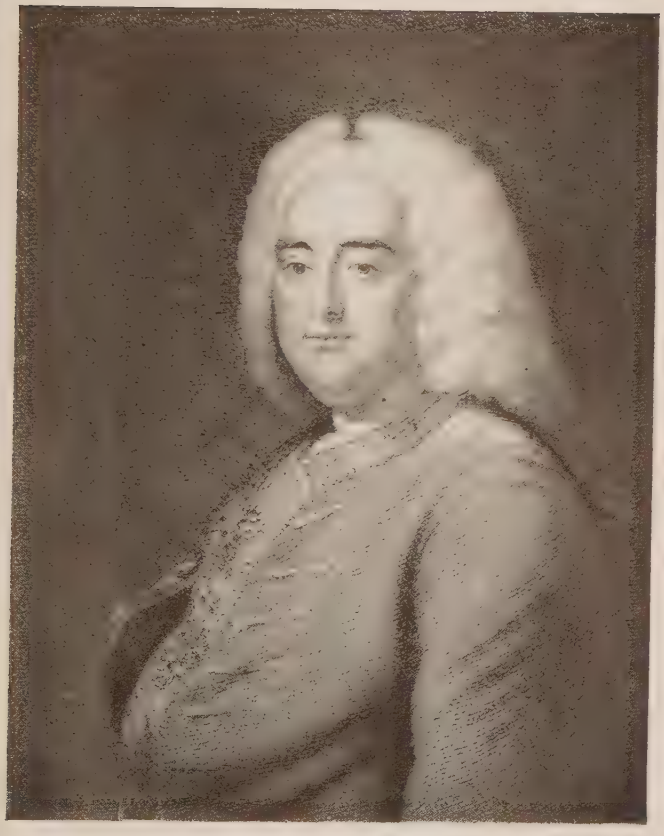
Bach) as his accompanist. The monarch had heard of the great musical powers of Bach, and constantly pleaded with the son that his father might make a visit to the court. At last the old man, now over sixty, made the journey. The king was at supper when the news was brought of the arrival of the wagon with its occupant; springing from the table the monarch broke up the meal with the words, "Gentlemen, old Bach is here!" and took him, weary as he was with travel, through the palace. He played upon the king's pianos, but said that he preferred the clavichord, and considered the piano fitted only for light rondos or variations; he improvised a four-voiced fugue upon a subject given by Frederick himself, and, subsequently, elaborated it into a six-voiced fugue, now existing in his "Art of Fugue." It is said that the king sent Bach a sum of money after this visit, which was embezzled before it reached the poor composer.

The journey laid the foundation of Bach's last illness. He was old and feeble when he undertook the trip, and the excitement must have been very enervating to him. He laid another heavy task upon his eyesight by engraving (upon copper plates) his own "Art of Fugue," as the only means of giving it to the world. Blindness came upon him in spite of two operations upon his eyes. A six months' illness followed, when his sight suddenly returned, but he became frenzied with such joy at this that a fit of apoplexy followed, and the composer suddenly expired, at half past eight on the evening of July 28, 1750.

The family was obliged by poverty to disperse after his death, and some of them suffered the direst straits in after years, for Germany did not fully recognize the greatness of Bach until more than a half century later.

Bach's greatness does not rest upon a

single masterwork; he has many and diverse claims upon our recognition. He has given the world a most sublime work in his "Passion Music" according to Saint Matthew; he has left the most perfect organ compositions the world can ever hope to possess; he has established, by means of the "Well-tempered Clavichord," the division of the scale into twelve equal semitones; he may justly be called "The Father of Modulation," for he first practically established free modulation; and he was the man who reconciled the old church modes, the music of the Flemish and the old Italian schools, with the modern modes of treatment; he was the most masterly mind that ever appeared in music; he was truly religious, and bore afflictions and lack of due appreciation with noble resignation; and, in these modern days, when music is becoming a formless frenzy, when shape, melody, regular progression are all thrown to the winds, we



GEORG FRIEDRICH HÄNDEL

have a sheet anchor which may help us to weather the storm, and that anchor is John Sebastian Bach.

HÄNDEL.

George Frederick Händel was Bach's greatest contemporary. He was born in Halle (as already stated) on February 23, 1685. An English history succinctly states that "Händel's father was sixty-three years old when he was born," which would go to prove that Händel's male parent was a most remarkable baby, but the reader can readily grasp the meaning of the awkward statement. The boy received a good musical training from Zachau, in Halle, which added solid learning to his natural skill in improvisation. In his childhood a fortunate incident, which, at the same time, proves Händel's obstinate character, brought his musical abilities into proper notice; his father was to make a journey to visit the

Duke of Saxe-Weissenfels, and had refused his seven-year-old son permission to accompany him, although the lad pleaded hard to go. After the carriage had proceeded some distance, it was found that the lad had run after the coach, and was clinging to the rear of the vehicle. It was then too late to return, and, after a scolding, he was allowed to continue the journey. While at the palace of the duke, the boy, who had been secretly applying himself to spinet-playing, attracted the attention of the nobleman and his friends, who strenuously advised the father to allow him to continue his studies in music. It was after this event that Zachau was engaged as his teacher.

When a youth Händel formed a close companionship with a young musician, four years his senior, named Mattheson. This acquaintance was of practical advantage to Händel, for Mattheson was of good family and already well-known in Hamburg, where, after the

death of his father, Händel sought to provide subsistence for himself and his mother. In 1703 the friends went together to Lübeck, to compete in generous rivalry for the post of city organist, which the eminent Buxtehude was about to vacate. They were amazed, however, to learn that the old organist made one primary condition, — the successful contestant was to marry his daughter. After looking at the lady, they decided not to enter into the contest!

At this time the city of Hamburg was making a strange attempt to establish German opera: a brilliant, but decidedly careless, composer named Reinhardt Keiser was furnishing operas, with fireworks, processions, and with three or four languages mingled in the representation, and was making a temporary success only endangered by most spendthrifty habits. Knowing the jealous character of the average composer, Händel offered his services in the

orchestra of the opera company, having, seemingly, just enough ability to play second violin, and nothing more. But one day when Keiser had suddenly run away from his creditors, and the orchestra was without a head, our second violinist suggested that he might be able to direct the scheme as well as play a subordinate part. For a time the new arrangement worked well, but a sudden quarrel with Mattheson at this period nearly ended the career of the genius altogether. His refusal to allow Mattheson to conduct part of his own opera so enraged that composer, that, at the end of the opera, he gave Händel a box on the ear. Instantly drawing their swords, they began a duel, which ended by Mattheson's weapon breaking against a large button on Händel's coat, which, fortunately, prevented it from going through his body. The quarrel subsided almost as quickly as it had arisen.

After a few years of activity as composer

and director to the Hamburg opera, Händel, in 1706, left Germany for Italy, where he acquired that ability in Italian operatic composition and that love of dramatic effect which was to help him, after many years, in the production of his masterpieces.

On his return to Germany he entered the service of George, Elector of Hanover, but subsequently applied for a furlough in order that he might pay a short visit to England. Once in England, however, he found such an amount of appreciation that he decided not to return to his Hanoverian master. One can imagine his dismay when, on the death of Queen Anne, the Hanoverian succession was effected, and his master from across seas became King of England. Händel thought that his career was ruined, but an ingenious expedient of Baron Kilmanseck brought about a reconciliation.

The king was to have a water party upon the Thames, and the composer was informed

of it. During the procession of the barges up the river, a barge drew near to the royal boat and discoursed most beautiful music. After a time, George I. asked the name of the composer of the music which so charmed him, whereupon they told him that it was written by his old servant, Händel, who had composed it especially for the occasion. Händel was admitted to the royal barge and again taken into favor. The so-called "Water-music," which gained his pardon, is still occasionally played in our concerts.

There now ensued many years of operatic management in London, during which Händel made and lost many fortunes and wrote many operas. These operas (because of the change of many operatic fashions) were not destined to be immortal, but they were preparatory to something much greater.

After his fiftieth birthday, Händel suddenly took a resolution to leave operatic composition, and to devote himself entirely

to the sacred side of music, — "as becomes a man descending the vale of years." Julius Cæsar won all his great victories after his fiftieth year ; Händel won his immortal crown as a composer during the same late epoch. "The Messiah" crowned his career, and left him the most popular composer of his time, although he never reached the great heights of Bach.

He was a most rapid worker. His masterpiece was written in about three weeks, and some of his other oratorios were also produced with astonishing rapidity. When his inventive genius did not produce melodies quickly enough for his purpose, he would boldly steal any beautiful tune that suited his purpose, without going through the slight formality of giving its composer credit for it. He has been called "the grand old robber," but it must be confessed that, when he stole a melody, he enriched it so with his contrapuntal genius that the crime car-

ried its own extenuation with it. "That pig don't know what to do with such a tune!" he cried, when they reproached him with stealing the melody of another composer.

Händel was imperious in the extreme, and irascible as well. He needed these qualities in managing the spoiled darlings of the public who sang in some of his operas. Cuzzoni, for example, was a most capricious prima donna; after Händel had altered a certain aria for her a half dozen times, she suddenly declined to sing in the opera altogether. They were rehearsing in the third story of the opera-house; suddenly seizing her, the composer dragged her to the window, and held her out; "You will sing, or I shall drop you," he cried; she sang thereafter with more ready obedience for Händel than for any other man in London.

Händel was something of a glutton, and there is a caricature of his day which represents him with the head of a hog, seated at

the organ, while the instrument is garnished with hams, sausages, and other coarse foods.

His conduct became much more exemplary in his later years, for he then grew more charitable and less irascible. When blindness came upon him he bore it with exemplary fortitude, although the musical picture which he had composed, of Samson's blindness ("Total Eclipse"), caused him to weep. He died April 14, 1759, appreciated by England as no composer had ever been before.

He was far bolder in his orchestral treatment than Bach had ever been; in fact, many touches of tone-color which are credited to modern composers can be found by the student in the old operas of this pioneer of the orchestra, and his dramatic power must always make him the favorite contrapuntist of the general public.

CHAPTER IV.

HAYDN AND MOZART.

FRANZ JOSEF HAYDN.

GERMANY at this epoch is repaying the debt it owes to Italy; no longer do we find a long list of Italian geniuses in music, while Germany assumes the leadership, and to the names of Bach and Handel are added those of Haydn and Mozart, the former evolving instrumental music in its modern guise, the latter adding a totally new splendor to opera.

Haydn is called "the father of instrumental form," and to him we owe the classical symphony, the sonata, the string quartette. He was born at the little Austrian village of Rohrau, March 31, 1732, in the humblest of

JOSEPH HAYDN.

circumstances, his parents being peasants, his birthplace a mere farmhouse of one story, with a rough barn attached. His musical abilities were discovered in his childhood, and a cousin named Frankh offered to train the young prodigy. The training was of the conventional sort of that epoch, and was plentifully interspersed with floggings when the lessons went wrong.

Two years later, George Reuter, director of the great cathedral of Vienna, heard the lad and caused him to become a member of the choir of St. Stephen's, promising good musical training to the young singer. Frankh had been a hard teacher but an earnest one, but Reuter was neither ; he simply neglected the lad altogether, and while Haydn all his life cherished gratitude for the former master, he states that he can remember only two regular lessons in music given him by Reuter, and this in spite of the fact that he was full of ambition and showed many indications of

musical zeal. He learned absolutely nothing at the cathedral school, although the daily hearing of fine music must have been good pabulum for the incipient composer.

But the evil day came when his voice broke, and as he had also played a boyish prank on a fellow student by cutting off his pigtail, and as the Empress of Austria had said "that young Haydn sings like a crow," he was suddenly expelled from the choir and the school, a sound flogging being added to the dismissal.

Haydn now lived for a little while upon the charity of a friend named Spangler. He could have returned to his parents at Rohrau, but he feared that this would mean an abnegation of his musical career, and he clung to his art with a species of frenzy. He was at this time almost entirely self-taught, Fux's "Gradus ad Parnassum," Mattheson's works, and the sonatas of Philipp Emanuel Bach being his daily study. He had a few pupils, and also obtained an occasional chance to

play violin at dances, bravely struggling with a famine that seemed to become chronic.

A Viennese tradesman, named Buchholtz, now insisted upon loaning him one hundred and fifty florins, without either interest or security, until better days should come. It was altogether a lucky transaction, for Haydn at once hired a garret of his own in a large house, and in this house there dwelt a poet who had many musical connections,—the celebrated Metastasio. This gentleman soon took a friendly interest in the poor young man who dwelt so far above him, and not only got some fashionable pupils for him, but introduced him to the great singing teacher, Porpora (probably the greatest vocal teacher the world has ever possessed), who occasionally allowed him to act as accompanist at his lessons and also to become his body-servant. Haydn has been called "Porpora's boot-black," and the title is no exaggeration, for he was glad to perform any menial services

for the master who occasionally helped him along the thorny road of composition, and who allowed him to sit by during many a music lesson given to richer pupils.

Haydn was now about twenty, and had received buffetings ever since he had left the farm; the results of this early career left their marks upon his character, and while he was always cheerful (for adversity did not sour him), he was also always servile and had not an iota of the independence which marked Beethoven's character. At this time he composed his first mass, a remarkable work for a self-taught genius. He also wrote an opera, and for a long time afterwards imagined that his special power lay in the direction of operatic composition, — a decided mistake.

The dark days were now ended; he soon composed a set of sonatas which came to the notice of the aristocracy, and Countess Thun soon brought to him a circle of well-

paying pupils, and finally induced Count Maximilian Morzin, a wealthy Bohemian, to engage him as director of his private orchestra. Now at last our young composer had an opportunity to attempt orchestral composition, and the result was that he composed a host of string quartettes and, in 1759, his first symphony.

In 1760 he married. It was a most unhappy match; he had wooed the youngest daughter of a wig-maker named Keller, but the maiden was deeply religious, and finally became a nun. The father urged him to marry the elder daughter instead, and Haydn assented, although she was three years his senior. There followed many years of domestic infelicity, and finally a separation; the wife was a virago of the most pronounced type, who could have given points to Xantippe herself.

A year after the marriage we find Haydn appointed second kapellmeister to Prince

Paul Anton Esterhazy. The contract shows how much of a servant the musician was in the last century; in it Haydn is commanded to be strictly temperate, to abstain from any coarseness in eating, in dress, or in manners, and he was at this time constantly addressed in the contemptuous third person as "Er."

Nevertheless he was entirely satisfied, was delighted with the quality of his sixteen musicians and with his vocalists, and when Prince Paul died and Prince Nicholas, the most munificent of the Esterhazys, succeeded him, we find Haydn appointed kapellmeister, with a good salary, which he greatly increased by the sale of his compositions, which were now becoming known all over the world.

He still remained in seclusion at Esterhazy, however, writing symphony after symphony, quartette after quartette, and receiving gold medals, diamond rings, and other tributes of

homage from the sovereigns and nobility of Europe. His service might have gone on until his death had not Prince Nicholas died in 1790, leaving Haydn a good pension. Prince Anton, his successor, was unmusical, and dismissed the orchestra.

Haydn, now fifty-eight years of age, was free to go wherever he pleased for the first time in his life. A London manager and conductor named Salomon immediately took advantage of this favorable turn of affairs to induce the great composer to visit England to give a series of concerts, and the first of January, 1791, finds Haydn in a foreign country for the first time. Here the highest honors were showered upon him; his symphonies (six of his very best were composed for this first tour) received the best performance and the highest commendation; he was the guest of the Prince of Wales for three days; he was given the honorary degree of doctor by Oxford University; the Prince of

Wales played the violoncello part in one of his compositions, and the Viennese guest had all the aristocratic pupils that he could take at the highest prices.

In 1792 he was again in Vienna, received with rejoicing by the entire city. A young composer by the name of Beethoven followed him to Vienna at this time to take lessons in counterpoint and general composition. Haydn rather neglected these lessons, a fact not much to be wondered at when the fact is borne in mind that Beethoven paid only twenty cents a lesson, and that Haydn had just come from overwhelming honors and high prices in England.

Haydn was much impressed while in London by the respect shown by the English for their national hymn, "God Save the King," and determined that he would write one for his own country. On his return, therefore, from the English tour, he wrote the present national hymn of Austria, "Gott erhalte

Franz den Kaiser," almost the only instance of a national anthem being written with premeditation; the work, however, bears a strong relationship to the English national hymn, although based on a Croatian tune.

In 1794 Haydn was induced to make a second journey to England; he had thought of bringing his pupil, Beethoven, with him, but that young man had irritated him so constantly that he called him "the Great Mogul," and left him behind in Vienna. During this stay in England even royalty itself was at Haydn's feet, and he was invited to spend the summer in Windsor Castle, but preferred to return to Vienna. Six more symphonies were composed during this second tour, making the two sets of "English Symphonies," the culmination of his orchestral works.

The pinnacle of his fame was reached with the oratorio "The Creation," and the great cantata "The Seasons." The latter

work killed its composer, for the frenzy of composition was too much for his now enfeebled frame. In his seventy-sixth year a great performance of "The Creation" was given in his honor in Vienna, and it is possible that the excitement attendant upon this gave him his death-blow. In the oratorio, at the words "Let there be light, — and there was light," there is a thrilling change from minor to major; the day had been overcast and the skies were lowering and threatening; just as the final words were reached the sun burst forth in full splendor and flooded the hall with light; a strange thrill went through the audience, and all eyes were turned towards the old composer, who arose in great excitement and, pointing towards heaven, cried out, "It came from there!" This expressed the devout belief in the divine origin of his gifts that had been characteristic of Haydn from the very beginning. The excitement, however, was too intense

for him, and he soon lay on his death-bed.

During his final illness the French were bombarding Vienna. His servants were terrified, but, with amusing conceit, he assured them, "You are safe with Haydn!" He caused them to carry him to the piano, where he played the "Austrian Hymn," his own, three times. During this same bombardment there was another composer in Vienna who sat in perturbation within a cellar, with cotton wool stuffed in his ears, fearing that the sound of the explosions would ruin his already weakened hearing; this was Louis van Beethoven.

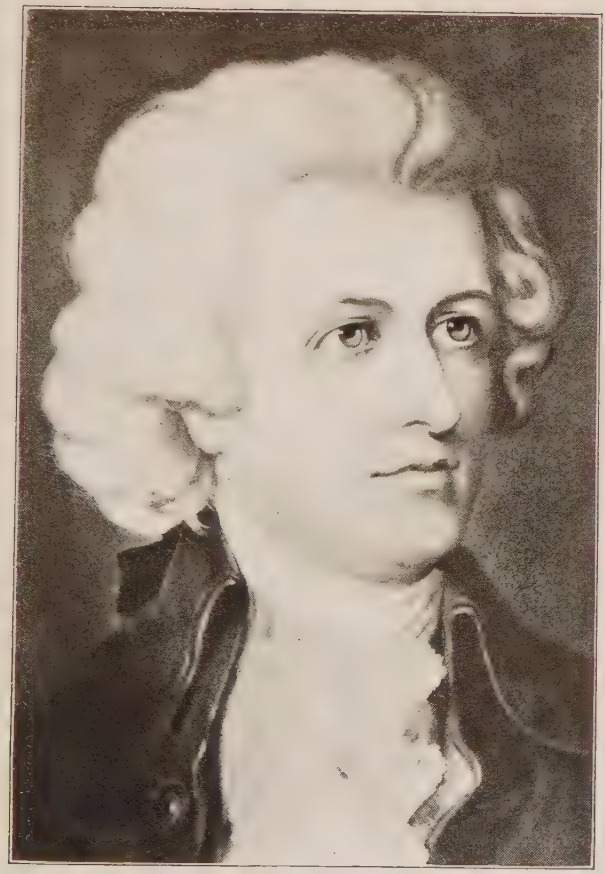
It was a pleasant proof that Art belongs to no one country, to find the French officers visiting the sick Haydn after the city had been captured. Some of them were present at the funeral which very soon followed, for Hadyn died May 31, 1809.

Haydn's most perfect musical expression,

judged by the taste of the present day, is found in his string quartettes; his symphonies have been overshadowed by later productions in this form. His "Creation" is memorable as giving a series of graphic pictures with the help of the orchestra in a manner which went beyond the attempts of Gluck, but its third part seems very conventional nowadays. It has become the fashion to patronize "Papa Haydn," but he was a pioneer in many fields of music, and the composer of the present would be much the better for a little of the dainty grace and constant melody which was his chief characteristic.

WOLFGANG AMADEUS MOZART.

There are two lives among the biographies of great composers which are especially pathetic: Mozart and Schubert were both geniuses, both underrated while they were alive, both engaged with an incessant combat with the wolf at the door, and both died

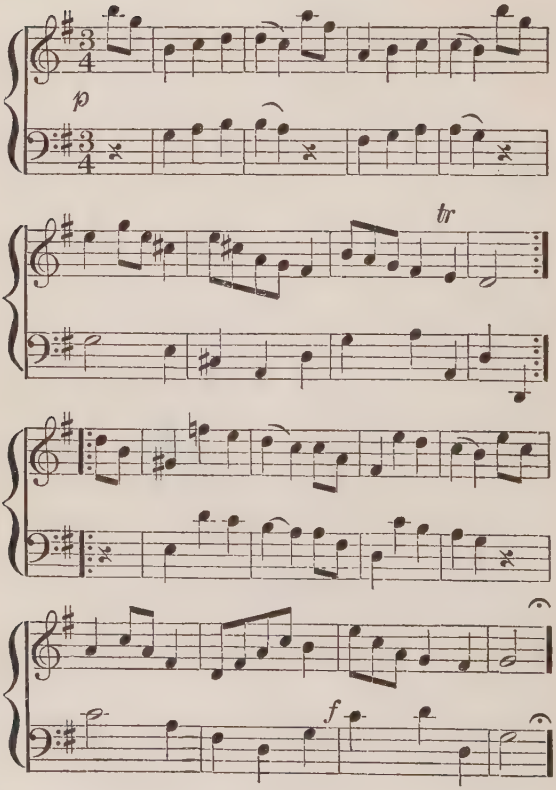


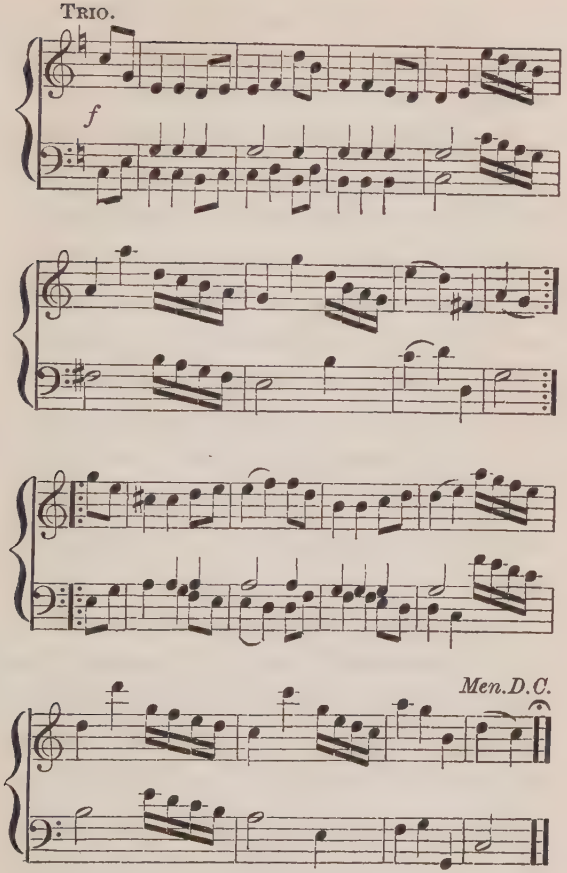
WOLFGANG MOZART.

young because of this incessant conflict, and probably of the same disease. Both were also the most spontaneous of musical creators, but with Mozart this creative faculty was combined with a phenomenal amount of learning.

Mozart was born in the city of Salzburg, January 27, 1756. His father, Leopold Mozart, was a good musician, a fine violinist, and a pious man. The child was a strange one, emotional, old-fashioned, and deemed unlikely to live. He had a peculiarly shaped aural passage, much smaller than ordinary children, and the sound of a trumpet would send him into spasms of terror. He was wonderfully susceptible to the general sounds of music, however, and would reach up to the keyboard of the spinet on which his sister Maria Anna took her music lessons, and endeavor to imitate the pleasant sounds, before he was four years old. At five years he composed the composition which is herewith printed.

MENUETT UND TRIO.




TRIO.
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The father, who was attached to the musical establishment of the Archbishop of Salzburg, soon obtained leave of absence and made a concert tour with his two prodigies. At Vienna the children met with a great reception, the young Mozart playing before the Empress Maria Theresa, and also becoming a playmate of the little princess who afterwards became Queen of France, the unfortunate Marie Antoinette. The triumphal journey was extended to Paris and to London. A golden harvest was reaped in the tour, a strong contrast to the lack of pecuniary result which attended all of Mozart's later efforts.

In 1770 the boy of fourteen was taken to Italy, where honors were still showered upon him. The Pope decorated him; he met with the greatest singer of his time, the celebrated Farinelli; and the great contrapuntist, Padre Martini, gave him some tests of musicianship which the lad easily met. At this time he

gave proof of his musical memory by writing out the Allegri "Miserere" (which the papal singers desired to keep for themselves) after a single hearing at the Sistine Chapel.

The entire Italian sojourn was of great value to Mozart, for it gave him a good comprehension of opera and taught him how to express his musical ideas with that singability which is so often absent from the works of the German masters, who are sometimes unvocal even in their greatest oratorios, cantatas, and operas. The Italian journey was, however, soon interrupted by a summons from the Archbishop of Salzburg, who commanded a return. In 1772 we find Mozart, now a youth of sixteen, in the service of the archbishop, and remaining placidly in Salzburg for the next five years. Meanwhile he has given an opera, "La Finta Giardiniera," at Munich, with decided success, and his Italian career has been studded with other less important operas and sacred works.

In 1777 the father thought that another tour might be profitable, but his prospects were nipped in the bud by the archbishop, who roughly replied to his application for leave of absence, "I don't want such beggary from town to town!" The young Mozart thereupon demanded his dismissal, which was angrily granted with the remark, "It will only be one musician the less!" The tour was therefore made without the father, Mozart and his mother setting out together. Munich and Augsburg were visited without much result, and then came Mannheim, where there was a large orchestra under the patronage of the Elector Karl Theodore. Here Mozart remained for a time, making musical acquaintances right and left, and heartily enjoying "The Paradise of Musicians," as Mannheim was often called.

Among his musical acquaintances were the Webers, the father being connected

with the Mannheim theatre, and all the five daughters being more or less talented. The second daughter, Aloysia, a beauty, and a good singer, won the heart of the composer, and he seemed intent on remaining in Mannheim indefinitely. The father of Mozart, hearing of the state of the case, sent a firm letter, commanding a continuation of the journey and a departure for Paris. Mozart had always the utmost respect for the wishes of his father, and therefore tearfully parted from his sweetheart, who gave him two pairs of mittens which she had worked for him. The present was typical, for she afterwards gave him the mitten altogether, being piqued that Mozart should place his father's wishes above her affection.

In Paris Mozart was, naturally enough under the circumstances, very sour and gloomy. Yet the stay was of great benefit to him, for here he learned that dramatic expression in opera which Italy was at that

time not competent to teach. But the death of his mother and the French indifference to German composers led to a return to Salzburg. It was almost a presentiment when Mozart, after starting homeward, denounced his return as a piece of folly, and said that he had cast away his future by not remaining in France.

Mozart always hated the Philistine city of Salzburg, and he was not more inclined to it after his enforced return from France. When, therefore, he was called at the end of 1780 to produce another opera in Munich, he was in no hurry to return to his prison. The archbishop (in whose service Mozart was once more bound) had, meanwhile, started to Vienna, and thither Mozart was summoned in a peremptory manner. The archbishop was in a bad humor, and he especially hated the rather independent young composer. The reception, therefore, was warm even to sultriness; the arch-

demon, or rather the archbishop, called Mozart such names that it is impossible to reprint them here; he forced him to take his meals with the servants, and in every manner he seemed to delight in goading the composer-servant to frenzy. At last Mozart begged to be dismissed altogether, and the archbishop's steward was commissioned to kick the discharged composer violently down-stairs! It is possible that the two lives given in this chapter may impress upon the reader the status of the general musician during the last century. Haydn and Mozart, during the early part of their careers, were treated somewhat more disdainfully than servants are in the present century.

Although poverty was before him, at least Mozart had suffered his last contumely. Joseph II., Emperor of Austria, took up the composer — and put him down again. Playing before the emperor brought

in fifty ducats; then came a commission to set "The Escape from the Seraglio." After the performance (1782), the emperor only said, "Too many notes." "Just enough notes for the subject, your majesty," replied the undaunted composer.

In 1782 Mozart married Constance Weber, sister of the Aloysia who had first won his heart and had now married an actor named Lange. It was an ill-considered match, although both parties loved each other tenderly; the wife was as helpless in household thrift as Mozart was unpractical, and so these babes in the woods went gaily into a married state that promised privation in all abundance, but not much of anything else.

Constance Mozart long outlived her husband, and remarried some time after his death. Her own death occurred as late as 1842.

Mozart has been accused, on rather insuffi-

cient evidence, of being a very dissipated man, and the same charge has been made against Schubert. The same reply will suffice for both these charges: both these masters died very young, yet both left an enormous list of compositions; therefore, their work was constant; but both were "Wienerkinder" ("children of Vienna"), and had the social character and the failings of their time and environment, — they were neither better nor worse than the Viennese of their day.

After the marriage the fight with poverty was constant in the Mozart household, yet there was no despondency. Joseph Deiner has left an account of his coming suddenly into their room and finding the pair waltzing around the apartment. "We were cold," said they, "and we have no wood." Yet there were moments of triumph, too, although these never by any chance turned into cash. "The Marriage of Figaro" made

a great success at Vienna, and in Prague caused a veritable furore. The composer was called to Prague, was the guest of a nobleman there, was honored by the entire city, and the orchestra rose and blew a "Tusch" (a fanfare of homage) whenever he came to the theatre.

Mozart's was undoubtedly a Bohemian career, in which poverty itself was treated with insouciance. He thought once of going again to London. Had he gone there in his adult years he might have repeated the experience of Haydn (he died in the same year that Haydn was being fêted in London), and his loftiest works might have proceeded from English encouragement; had he stayed in Paris he would also have eventually become well-to-do. This is one of the "ifs" of musical history.

Mozart was an enthusiastic Freemason (yet at the same time a fairly devout Catholic), and this led to his composing some

very important masonic music, and is also said to have inspired some of the mysterious touches in his opera of "The Magic Flute." He declined a liberal offer to enter the service of the King of Prussia from an absurd loyalty to the Emperor of Austria, who allowed him to starve. The prices that he received for some of his operas are incredibly small. "Don Giovanni," his greatest work, and one of the world's imperishable masterpieces, obtained for him the sum of one hundred ducats, which is less than a modern music copyist would transcribe the parts for. This great opera was first produced in Prague, October 29, 1787, and Mozart is said to have composed the overture the night before the performance.

In 1788 Mozart wrote his last three symphonies (he wrote forty-nine in all, while Haydn composed about one hundred and fifty), and each of these works is a masterpiece in its way, the one in E flat being the

first symphony with a clarinet part, the one in C being the great "Jupiter Symphony," the most ambitious symphony of the last century, and the one in G minor being a very violet among symphonies, the tenderest and daintiest instrumental composition of the master. In 1791 came his last opera, "The Magic Flute," and then came the swan song, the "Requiem."

There has been much imaginative literature written about the strange circumstances attending the production of this work; it is therefore well to state the details of the matter. In 1791 there came to the dwelling of Mozart a man clothed in black, who dismounted from a carriage that bore no marks of identification. The stranger sought the composer, and asked him if he could write a requiem mass to order. This appealed to Mozart's Catholic feelings, and he gladly accepted the commission. The price was fixed, and the mysterious stranger,

refusing to give his name, at once paid half of it in gold, fixing the date when he would return and pay the other half, and take the finished composition. He returned at the time he had set, but Mozart had been directing some of his operas, and had failed to complete the work. Another date was set, and the stranger again departed, still preserving his incognito. Now Mozart began to brood over the matter; he was in poor health, and he became firmly convinced that the stranger was a messenger from the other world to announce his death to him; he felt that the "Requiem" was to be his own funeral song. He had been treated with such injustice and jealousy by all with whom he had dealings that he imagined that some one had poisoned him. His premonitions were verified in so far that the "Requiem" was sung around his death-bed in order that he might hear the effect of some of its numbers.

Here many of the biographies end their tale, leaving the impression of a well-developed ghost story. The remaining facts clear up the mystery. The stranger came after Mozart's death, and claimed the "Requiem," paying the balance due, and disappearing as mysteriously as before. It was long afterwards proven that the man was Leutgeb, steward of Count von Walsegg, an eminent scoundrel who desired to give out the composition as his own, which at once accounts for the secrecy which surrounded the entire proceedings.

But there is enough of mystery still surrounding the "Requiem." Mozart was not able to entirely finish it before his death, and consequently he commanded his pupil, Süssmayer, to write out the incomplete portions; it is, therefore, difficult to assert just what parts have been written by the master and which by the pupil. Fortunately, the musical thief, when giving forth the com-

position as his own, did not destroy the original manuscript, and portions of it coming to light long after, proved that the "Requiem" belonged to Mozart; but for years there was a controversy about the authorship of the great work, and those who claimed it for the real composer were met by the undoubtedly true statement that the composition was altogether more grave and severe than Mozart's style of work, but the sorrowful premonitions attending its creation fully account for this.

It may be mentioned here that if fate came near to depriving Mozart of the honor of one of his own works, it has, on the other hand, given him credit for a composition which he probably did not write; there is much controversy going on regarding the authorship of what is called "Mozart's Twelfth Mass," of which Mozart probably wrote very little. There are other compositions in the repertoire which have similar

doubtful origins. Thus, Schubert's "Adieu" is probably not Schubert's at all; Weber's "Last Thought" was not his last nor his first; in fact, it was not his thought at all, but a pretty waltz by Reissiger; and Beethoven's "Farewell to the Piano" was written by him long before he wrote his greatest piano compositions, the last five sonatas, and was simply an Album-leaf of no very great merit.

Mozart died December 5, 1791, and it seemed as if fate had even then not ended its persecutions, for, on the day of his funeral, a great storm arose, and the few friends who made up the cortège turned back at the gate of the cemetery. The body was laid in one of the common tombs in which many other coffins were placed. When at last the world awoke to the fact that a great master had died, there was no one who could identify his resting-place. As the burial had taken place some years before, it is probable that the tomb had been emptied,

and a new set of occupants interred. Therefore, the monument to Mozart, in the great central cemetery of Vienna, stands over an empty grave, and no one knows where the dust of this composer has its sepulture.

In the present days, when turgidity and dissonance seem to be the aim of many modern composers, Mozart is sometimes looked upon as too naïve and simple, but it is doubtful if a more fluent composer ever existed; his great learning is never obtruded upon the auditor in any manner; gentility and daintiness are in almost all of his works; he had a fund of melody only equalled by Haydn, and in his operas, even in his most earnest moments, he never becomes in the slightest degree unvocal. Among the German composers there are only two who in their vocal works are always and entirely singable, and these are Schubert and Mozart.

Mozart is scarcely to be regarded as a reformer in music; he did not invent much

that was entirely new, but rather advanced and developed the forms and theories which had been established by his predecessors. He followed Haydn in symphony and sonata, but gave a finer treatment to these forms than Haydn had done; he was the successor of Gluck in opera, yet his "Don Giovanni" carried the theories of "Orpheus" to infinitely greater heights. He was, however, the founder of the instrumental concerto, and the first to apply the sonata-movement form regularly to the overture. He left seven hundred and sixty-nine compositions in all, ranging from the very largest to the simplest song-forms. In literature Milton has not abolished Wordsworth; in music not the most lurid modern orchestral scores can abolish the glories of Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart.

CHAPTER V.

LUDWIG VAN BEETHOVEN.

If musicians were asked the question, "Who is the greatest of all the musical masters?" most of them would reply, "Beethoven." Yet this is a statement not entirely true; judged from the purely intellectual standpoint, Bach is, probably, the greatest musician that ever lived; weighed by the standard of emotional expression Chopin might be accorded the leadership. It is always dangerous to attempt to rank composers one with another, but it is safe to say that in the perfect combination of the intellectual and the emotional sides of music no one has, as yet, equalled Beethoven, and it is just this equipoise of brain and heart

that appeals most strongly to the modern auditor.

Beethoven was born at Bonn, December 16 (there is some doubt about this date), 1770; Beethoven himself maintained that his birth-year was 1772, but this opinion has been disproved. He came of a musical family, but probably inherited his sturdy character and his broad musicianship from his grandfather, who attained to the rank of kapellmeister. His father was also a musician, a tenor singer, member of the musical establishment of the Elector of Bonn, and, unfortunately, this parent was a worthless character, a confirmed sot. Beethoven therefore inherited both musical gifts and physical infirmities, for the deafness which came upon him in later years was a legacy from the dissipated side of his family. Beethoven's mother was of low social station, the daughter of a cook (Haydn's mother was also a cook), but she seems to have been the

busy bee in the otherwise shiftless household.

The remarkable childhood of Mozart had an unfortunate influence on the early years of Beethoven, for his worthless father had heard of the great success of the Mozart prodigies in Vienna, Paris, and London, and believed that he could line his own pockets if he made a musical prodigy of the young Louis. But Beethoven was not a prodigy, and if he had been, the father was not the person to foster the growth of early genius; the musical instruction given by him and a wretched boon-companion named Pfeiffer was intermittent and irregular, yet severe. After a day spent at the tavern the worthy pair would remember their duties as instructors, and the boy of five or six years would be exercised at the piano until late into the night; visitors at the Beethovens have left on record the fact of seeing the child at the piano, shedding tears over the keyboard, at

the mismanaged and irksome task. It is a wonder that the boy was not imbued with a distaste for music in these early years, but he progressed, although not at a "prodigy" pace, until the two "instructors" felt that he ought to have a regular teacher.

Christian Gottlieb Neefe was really the first teacher who awakened the love of music in the bosom where it had been smouldering; he gave the lad a good deal of Bach as study, and seems to have awakened a genuine love for the masters in the rather sombre and melancholy boy. A very respectable two-voiced fugue which the young Beethoven wrote at this time still exists, and there were some sonatas composed by him which show that the classical forms were being worked at to good advantage.

Such achievements drew the attention of the Elector of Bonn towards him, and Beethoven was soon sent to Vienna to complete his musical education. His general

education had been almost totally neglected, and this defect was never wholly remedied, Beethoven being more or less illiterate all his days. In Vienna he met Mozart and is said to have taken a few lessons of him. It is stated that Mozart, on hearing the youth of seventeen years improvise, cried out, "Pay attention to this youngster; he will yet make a noise in the world!"

But the mother at home was dying, and the sad event drew Beethoven back to Bonn, where a miserable existence awaited him; the helpful housewife dead, the family was left in the palsied hands of the drunken father, whom Beethoven more than once had to rescue from the hands of the police. The elector took cognizance of the wretched plight of the family, and ordered that part of the salary of the father should be paid to the son, that they might not be reduced to utter starvation, and from eighteen to twenty-two we find the young Beethoven practically the

head of his little family, checking the father as far as possible and educating the two brothers. In 1792 the burden was somewhat lightened by the death of the shiftless parent. In the report of this event to the elector the terse statement is made, "Beethoven is dead, — it will be a great loss to the tax on liquors!"

But now there came another beneficial change in the young composer's life; he began to make friends among the aristocracy, and, strange as it may appear, considering Beethoven's uncouth manners and lack of education, these high-born friends were loyal to him through all his days, and his circle of noble acquaintances grew constantly wider. The first of these new friends were Count Waldstein (to whom the great sonata, Opus 53, is dedicated) and the Breunings, consisting of the widowed mother, her sons, and her daughter Eleonora. He taught the latter music, and she instructed him in general

literature, so that the educational defects spoken of above were in some degree ameliorated.

He fell in love with Eleonora, of course; he was continually falling in love, but the reader must by no means imagine the slightest tinge of immorality in this; these ideal affections were often the inspiration of Beethoven's loftiest music, and the Seventh Symphony, the Eighth, the so-called "Moonlight Sonata," the beautiful song "Adelaide," and much other of his music, may be traced to the awakening of romantic emotions through female influence. The Countess Erdoedy, Babette de Keglevics, Baroness Ertmann, Bettina Brentano, and several others were in turn the objects of Beethoven's pure affection.

There was, however, one deep and most earnest love in the composer's life, which is somewhat wrapped in mystery. After his death, three letters, full of the most devoted

passion, in his own handwriting, were found in a secret drawer of his desk. Thayer, in his great biography of Beethoven, ruthlessly demolishes some of the romance which has attached to these, but it is supposed that Giuletta Guicciardi, who afterwards married Count Gallenberg, was the object of these impassioned epistles.

As every lady to whom Beethoven paid his addresses accepted them either with complaisance or with deeper emotion, it has been stated that our deaf, brusque, and ugly composer imagined himself somewhat of a heart-breaker. He sometimes clothed himself in the height of fashion, which made the contrast with his ordinary untidy appearance only the more marked. Franz Lachner and Doctor Hiller have described to the author the personal appearance of Beethoven (whom they had seen) as that of a stunted giant, possessing a picturesque ugliness that had a peculiar charm.

In 1792 Beethoven left Bonn for good. The elector still remained his friend and assisted him towards a thorough education in Vienna. Three years of student life in the great musical metropolis now followed, at the end of which time Beethoven had a good reputation as a pianist and an improvisatore. He took lessons from Haydn, but we can imagine that the elder composer, fresh from great triumphs in London, had no very great enthusiasm for the instruction of a rather stubborn young man at twenty cents per lesson. One day, on his way home from one of the lessons, Beethoven met a young musician named Schenck, and, showing him his exercises for the day, was astounded to find that Haydn had left some twenty errors uncorrected. Although he continued with Haydn, he at once began taking lessons secretly of Schenck also. He was a sore trial to the rather formal Haydn, whom he often contradicted, and who called

him "The Great Mogul" because of his imperious ways.

When, a short time after, Beethoven dedicated his set of three sonatas, Opus 2, to Haydn, the latter asked why he did not add "Pupil of Haydn" to his name on the title. "Because I never learned anything of you," was the rough reply.

His lessons with the great contrapuntist Albrechtsberger were also marked with such bold deviations from the paths of implicit obedience to rule that the old teacher warned his other pupils to keep away from Beethoven, as he would be sure to lead them astray in their composition work. Spite of these rough ways and imperious manners, however, Beethoven added constantly to the circle of his titled admirers and friends. Prince Lichnowsky and his wife were among the first of these, and his Opus 1, a set of trios, is dedicated to this nobleman. This work was published in 1795, which year may

be taken as the beginning of Beethoven's earnest career in composition, although his symphonic composition began almost five years later, the first symphony being written in 1799, and first performed in 1800.

His works paid him well from the very beginning, all the aristocracy of Vienna being glad to subscribe to each new composition of the young composer; yet the true Beethoven, the iconoclast in instrumental music, the giant of thematic development, was not yet existent; it was only in 1804, when the "Heroic Symphony" was composed, that the world began to recognize that a musical Titan had arisen. From the very first Beethoven took the utmost care in the revision and perfection of his works, and this is the more remarkable, when we remember that he was an absolute master of improvisation. Truly, in the study of Beethoven's mode of composition, in his constant improvements upon his first in-

spiration in each of his compositions, one realizes the truth of the saying that "Genius is only a capacity for taking pains."

In 1801, before he had revealed the true Beethoven to the world, before his actual career as composer had fairly begun, deafness began to settle down upon him; whether this was a calamity to the world may be doubted, for it made the proud, sensitive nature more introspective than ever, and it was through this self-communing that his works attained that sombre and earnest vein that cannot be often found in his earliest numbers. Yet it is indicative of the nobility of Beethoven's nature that he never becomes lachrymose or morbid; his darkest compositions (unless it be a funeral march) end with either hope or tranquillity.

The coda of the first movement of the "Sonata Pathetique," for example, after the most tumultuous struggle, ends with resolution and vigor, the wonderful brood-

ing and groping which characterizes the slow movement of the sonata, Opus 106 (the longest sonata ever written for piano, a veritable symphony), ends with an attainment of peace. The bitterness in Beethoven's works is never without its antidote, and one might well apply Goethe's words to this musician:

"Wer nie sein Brod mit Thränen ass,
Wer nie die kummervolle Nächte
Auf seinem Bette weinend sass,
Der kenn't euch nicht, ihr Himm'lische Mächte."

"Who ne'er with tears hath ate his bread,
Who never through the night's still hours
Sat hopeless, weeping on his bed,
He knows ye not, ye heav'nly powers!"

But Beethoven was essentially aggressive and combative also, and this quality shows itself gloriously in such works as the "Heroic" or the Fifth Symphonies, in the "Sonata Pathetique," or in the "Egmont" music.

His humor was of fierce or grotesque style, very different from the dainty playfulness of a Mendelssohn; he was the very Aristophanes of music at times, as one can readily see in the Sixth or Eighth Symphonies, or in most of his scherzos.

This vein of brusquerie was a salient part of the composer's character, and not always a pleasant side, as the cook found out who brought him some rather stale eggs from market, and was pelted with them, one by one; or the waiter in the Viennese restaurant, who received a soup shower-bath upon serving him some tepid soup.

Beethoven was arbitrary in the greatest degree; although he sometimes played a jest upon others, he would not allow such a liberty to be taken with himself; thus he once asked Himmel, after that pianist had been improvising for over fifteen minutes, "When are you going to begin?" but when Himmel, some time after, returned the jest by inform-

ing him that a lantern had been invented for the blind, and Beethoven had swallowed the bait, he was furious on learning that he had been hoaxed.

But down deep in the bizarre and tyrannical nature there was a lofty ideal, a love of liberty, a belief in the universal brotherhood of mankind, and not only does the document sometimes called "Beethoven's will" show this, but it has become music in the overture to "Egmont," in the "Heroic Symphony," and in the Ninth Symphony.

In 1801 his deafness began to trouble him, and from this early epoch — he was now thirty-one years of age — there was constant doctoring of one sort or another. At this time he wrote: "I will try to defy fate; I may be most miserable at times, but I will not allow destiny to drag me down."

His quarrels were unending, so that even the Breunings, who loved him tenderly, were

at times sorely put to it to manage him; he was constantly changing his abode, sometimes forgetting to notify his landlord of his intention, so that lawsuits resulted.

His one great opera, "Fidelio," finished in 1805, brought him many annoyances at first, for he never could be as willing a purveyor for the stage singers as Mozart had been. His pension, allowed by the Elector of Bonn, was stopped at about this time, and this caused him to redouble his efforts in composition. Three of his noble admirers, the Archduke Rudolph, Prince Lobkowitz, and Prince Kinsky, now banded together, and secured to the composer an annuity of four thousand florins, but this subsequently became much less through the depreciation of the Austrian currency.

In 1812 we find the composer, suffering from swollen feet and from headaches, taking the bath cure at Töplitz and other resorts; during this period he met Amalia

Seebald, a beautiful soprano, and fell in love with her. It is certain that the affection was returned, but no biographer has ever ascertained the reason that no marriage resulted; it is pleasant to know that the Seventh and Eighth Symphonies were the outcome of this episode, and one searches in vain for a trace of the invalid in the joyous music of the latter work.

These were the stirring times of the French wars, most wretched days for the development of the fine arts, yet Beethoven seems to have kept his head well above water; his compositions were sought for in every part of Germany, France, and England, and a concert of his compositions given before six thousand people in Vienna is something memorable for that era of small audiences. He was made honorary member of many European academies, Vienna bestowed upon him the freedom of the city, and the Empress of Russia sent him

a large sum of money (nearly five thousand dollars) as a present.

Beethoven was certainly honored during his lifetime much beyond the homage which fate allowed to fall to the lot of other composers in his day. But there were troubles enough, too; the deafness was growing worse, and now, to crown all, his brother Caspar died and left his son to Beethoven's charge; the mother declining to accede to this arrangement, another lawsuit was added to Beethoven's collection of legal episodes. It was during this lawsuit that the court mistook Beethoven for a nobleman, because of the "Van" in his name ("Von" in the German indicates noble descent, while "Van" in the Dutch, and Beethoven was of Dutch or Flemish descent, does not necessarily do so), and when the query was put to the composer, "Are you of noble family?" he pointed to his head and his heart and replied, "My nobility is here and here!"

The nephew became a constant thorn in the flesh to Beethoven; as he grew up he neglected all study and was of irregular habits and generally unreliable; he entered the University as a student of philology, and failed in his examinations; he attempted suicide and failed in that also; he was arrested, finally, and ordered out of Vienna, and then entered the army; but by this time, his generous uncle being dead, he could trouble him no longer.

The homage of the world still continued; in 1818 the Broadwoods of London sent Beethoven a present of a grand piano; in 1822 the Emperor of Russia, the King of Prussia, and the King of France were among the subscribers to the edition of his great mass, at over one hundred dollars per copy, and an offer from the Philharmonic Society of London (accompanied by fifty pounds sterling) was received for a new symphony to be first played by them.

The quarrels also continued, and one by one Beethoven managed to alienate his friends, and Schindler, Maelzel (who frequently deserved it), Stephen Breuning, and others were made the recipients of the composer's unreasonable wrath; but underneath his furious temper and illiberal ways he cherished the constant ideal of universal brotherhood and love; while the Real was leading him into every kind of strife, the Ideal was crystallizing into the Ninth Symphony.

Beethoven's first idea was to have the great mass and the Ninth Symphony performed in Berlin, but an address came to him from the leading noblemen of Vienna begging him to allow these works to have their first hearing in the city of which he was a citizen. The composer was profoundly moved by the honor, and the 7th of May, 1824, beheld the great performance. It had been preceded by the usual annoyances; the

vocalists were earnest remonstrants, since the finale of the work, although most lofty in its musical ideas, is very unsingable. The emperor was absent from the performance, but all of the nobility of the capital were present and the house was crowded. Beethoven was at this time totally deaf; when the symphony was ended he did not hear the wild applause of the great audience, but stood gazing at the orchestra; one of the soloists was obliged to take him by the shoulders and turn him around, that he might acknowledge the enthusiasm; in that instant it came home to every auditor that the creator of the great tonal work had not heard a note of its performance, and by waving of hats and handkerchiefs they caused him at least to *see* their appreciation.

The repetition of the work a little later was a financial failure, and, as usual, the composer visited his unjust wrath upon his friends.

It was his last great symphony; in 1826 he went to his brother Johann at Gneixendorff with his unworthy nephew; this visit probably laid the foundation of his final illness, for his stingy sister-in-law put him in a bleak room and refused him a fire, the brother presented a bill for board, the nephew was incorrigible; therefore Beethoven suddenly set out for Vienna in an open conveyance. He had already exhibited a tendency towards dropsy, and his dosing himself with strong drink did not improve this, while now it became complicated with an inflammation of the lungs. Nevertheless, the composer worked on faithfully, writing his last string quartettes. The finale of the B-flat quartette was originally a very difficult and labored fugue; all the critics attacked this fugue as being an artificial affair, and for once Beethoven agreed with them; he caused the fugal finale to be published separately as Opus 133, and his last com-

plete composition was the present finale of this string quartette, Opus 130. A fragment of a string quintette which he was composing for Artaria, the publisher, was probably the last actual notation penned by the composer.

He was now living, a very sick man, in the Schwarzspanier Haus in Vienna. He had offended his previous physicians so that they would have no more of him, wherefore he called in a rather unskilled doctor, Wawruch by name. Dropsy was now asserting itself rapidly; he was tapped by Doctor Seibert, and jokingly alluded to the fact that they might draw water from his body but not from his pen. But matters were rapidly getting serious, on hearing which Doctor Malfatti, one of the physicians whom Beethoven had insulted during previous attendance, consented to come into the case. Beethoven welcomed him warmly, and now heaped contumely upon Doctor Waw-

ruch, whom he called "an ass" whenever he appeared.

He feared poverty in these last days, although he had several bank shares and other available capital concealed in his room. He appealed to the London Philharmonic for funds, and this society promptly sent him a hundred pounds and promised more should it be required.

It is interesting to notice that he grew to appreciate Schubert while on his death-bed; he looked upon a picture of Haydn's birthplace and said: "Strange that so great a man should have been born in such a hovel," and he spent some time looking through a great edition of Händel's works that had been presented to him, saying, "Das ist das Wahre," — "That is the true work."

The triumvirate of great symphonic writers, Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven, were Catholics, but with Beethoven this was not so devout a matter as with Haydn and (in some

degree) with Mozart, yet he received the final sacraments of the Church before the final agony set in. The very elements seemed to make the occasion memorable; as he was passing away a wild tempest of thunder and hail burst over the city; suddenly there was a blinding flash of lightning and a deafening roar of thunder; Beethoven, who had been lying comatose, heard the tumult and shook his fist as if giving a last defiance to fate, and with the reverberations of that mighty peal the soul of the composer went forth. He died February 26, 1827.

The funeral was memorable; all of Vienna seemed to be present to do honor to the dead Beethoven; the crowds were so immense that the soldiers were obliged to force a passage for the procession; Hummel, Kreutzer, Czerny, Lablache, and Schubert were in that cortège; poems and addresses were read, a choir sang on the

march, and four trombones played "Equali" by the composer who had gone to his rest.

We have already stated that the glory of Beethoven is in the fact that his music is deeply emotional, yet awakens the intellectual faculties by development of figures, by architectural structure, by symmetrical relationship of parts. In his orchestral works he was absolutely a liberator, and the contrabass, horns, kettledrums, trombones, and many other instruments seem first to fulfil their entire functions in his great works. He was distinctly an orchestral mind; even his later string quartettes and his piano sonata, Opus 106, are orchestral compositions in disguise.

His mode of composition was peculiar. Mozart often thought out his compositions while playing billiards, Gluck with a particular ring upon his finger, Scarlatti with his cat on his shoulder, Wagner with his sur-

roundings upholstered to fit his subject, but Beethoven loved to think out his compositions in God's open air; he took long walks into the country, carrying his memorandum book with him, and as the ideas came to him he would jot them down in a hideous and hasty scrawl. These memorandum books have been collected by Nottebohm and deciphered after herculean labor; they show most convincingly how seldom Beethoven was satisfied with his first thoughts. If he was composing at his desk and some stray thought came to his mind, he would jot it down upon a scrap of paper and place it in a basket by his side for use at some future time. Sometimes he had several of these baskets full of musical jottings, of which of course he never used a hundredth part. He thought out a good portion of his Ninth Symphony in a tree in Schönbrunn, near Vienna. Lachner has informed the author that in Vienna the inhabitants all

knew and loved the composer, and were accustomed to see him stand upon the sidewalk, or even in the street, writing, if some new thought had presented itself suddenly to his mind. He was naturally not so well known outside of Vienna, and, as his appearance was often very untidy, he was once arrested as a vagrant on one of his long walks. Sometimes he would meet a party of his noble acquaintances while pushing along in his shirt-sleeves, and in such a case he would march on without attempting to make himself presentable. The poet Goethe, the perfection of a courtier, was horrified by his lack of respect for the aristocracy, while Beethoven was indignant at Goethe's humble attitude towards princes. "Mann muss sie imponieren," — "One must be imposing with them," — said Beethoven, referring to his manners with the nobility.

A strange compound altogether: sturdy as his Flemish ancestors had been, a shy and

awkward nature intensified in its self-distrust by the greatest of all afflictions to a composer, — deafness; tender-hearted yet quarrelling with everybody; most liberal in his ideals, most illiberal in his actions; most sensitive yet most overbearing, — one must seek the key to this riddle in the music which he has left as a legacy to the world; here we have the real Beethoven, fighting a lifelong battle with destiny, never morbid, never yielding to despair, humorous at times, but in a rough and untamed way, loving liberty and believing ever in the brotherhood of all mankind, a model in art for all the coming ages.

CHAPTER VI.

FRANZ PETER SCHUBERT.

Among the various forms employed in musical composition, opera and oratorio may be classed as the highest, the symphony as the most developed instrumental structure, and the fugue as the most perfect presentation of logic in tones; but as in poetry one does not always demand epics, so in music one may desire a form which shall be less elaborate than the above, which shall yet be sufficiently dramatic, powerful, and complete to form a satisfactory art work. In vocal music this form has been found in the *Lied*, a style of composition of which Schubert may justly claim to be the father, although Schumann, Robert Franz, and to some extent

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Brahms, have also glorified the repertoire in this direction. Yet, as all the great composers, except Chopin, have won their laurels in various paths of composition, so Schubert's reputation, although resting chiefly upon the production of these vocal gems, was also gained in instrumental, choral, and other schools of work.

Schubert was the most poetic, the most spontaneous creator among all the composers. In him we come as near as possible to the fount of inspiration, for he penned his works as rapidly as the thoughts came to him, and rarely made any alterations afterwards, being in this the opposite of Beethoven.

He was born in Vienna, in the outlying district of Lichtenthal (the house is now No. 54 Nussdorfer Street and bears a tablet), January 31, 1797. He was the son of a poor schoolmaster who had eighteen other children. We have compared Schubert to Mozart, in a preceding chapter, in his poverty, in his fer-

tility of invention and in his short life, but Schubert was probably the poorest of all the composers who waged the combat with neglect and poverty. The evil fairies all seem to have showered their gifts into his cradle, for he was not only poor, but ugly in appearance and near-sighted as well. But one good fairy was there who gave to him a sweet voice and a love of music.

After early instruction received from his father and brother, the pleasing voice of the boy led to his admission to the parish choir, where the director, Holzer, gave him some further instruction. This instruction was not very far-reaching, however, although it served to bring his genius into early recognition.

"Whatever I try to teach him he seems to have known before," said Choirmaster Holzer, and soon after the lad was pushed as a chorister into the Imperial Chapel.

This promotion caused him to become a member of the school attached to the chapel,

the so-called "Konvict-Schule." This brought him in contact with Salieri, the eminent composer, who seems, however, not to have given him any real instruction beyond a few words of advice occasionally. Ruzicka, teacher of thorough-bass, gave him a few lessons. At the Imperial school the lad underwent a thorough course in starvation, for there is a letter extant in which he begs a few kreutzers (pennies) from his brother to ease the pangs of hunger, which arose between the two meals which were vouchsafed to the growing lads of the Konvict.

His musical enthusiasm at this time knew no bounds, but he was limited by a very peculiar fetter, he was unable to buy music paper. A comrade somewhat older than himself, and in much better circumstances (who afterwards became Baron Von Spaun), fortunately discovered this paper famine, and generously relieved it.

In 1813 there came a change of voice, and

the sixteen-year-old lad was obliged to leave the school. At eighteen years we find him becoming an assistant school-teacher in order that he might escape the conscription which was peculiarly stringent at this time. He had already composed some ambitious works at this epoch; at seventeen he had written his first mass, and his pious father was so delighted with this that he scraped together money enough to purchase his talented son a new piano. He had attempted an opera, but the score of this work is now only a fragment, because he left it as a pledge for a debt with a friend, Hüttenbrenner, and when, years afterwards, people began searching for the mislaid compositions of the master, they found that the servant had lit the fires with the whole first act and part of the second! Many of Schubert's compositions were lost in such a manner, and the search for them is still going on in Vienna. Schumann, Sir George Grove, and, at the present time, a

rich Roumanian, named Dumba, have unearthed some of these lost compositions, and there is reason to hope for more.

At eighteen Schubert wrote the "Erlking," producing it at a white heat, in a single day. The author of the words, the poet Goethe, never appreciated the glorious setting, and in fact, seems to have had a very defective taste in music, although gifted in so many other directions.

At this time Schubert began making pleasant acquaintances among artists and musicians. Among the first of these was the poet Mayrhofer, who wrote many subjects for his musical setting. Schubert was a genial and chatty nature, while Mayrhofer had a vein of melancholy in his disposition that afterwards led to insanity and suicide; the two seemed attracted to each other by the law of opposites.

Soon after there came another friend who rescued him from the drudgery of his schoolteaching. Franz Von Schober was a Swede,

fairly well-to-do, and had accidentally seen some of Schubert's songs before he came to Vienna; he conceived a great admiration for their unknown author, and when he found him a young man of about his own age, he at once suggested that Schubert share his apartments, and try to find music pupils. This was done, and for many years the two were almost inseparable.

Von Schober seems to have thoroughly understood Schubert's nature and gifts, and being a poet also, he gave him verses for musical setting that brought out the composer's best powers. There is one of these poems which so perfectly reflects Schubert's own life (it is set to music by him) that it may be reproduced here in a translated form.

"TO MUSIC."

"Thou Holy Art! How oft in sad, gray hours,
When Life seemed dull and hopeless unto me,
Hast thou upheld me with thy mighty powers,
And oped a purer, better world to me.

"Oft has a tone from thy great harp immortal,
Smoothed out the wrinkles from my troubled brow.
Unlocked for me of Paradise the portal;
Thou blessed Art, I thank thee for it now!"

Von Schober was also able to introduce Schubert to certain artists who were likely to prove of great service to him in his work; among these was the famous baritone singer, Johann Michael Vogl, just the cultivated musician to carry Schubert's standard out into the world. At first he held aloof from making the acquaintance of a young composer who might bore him with weak compositions, but he very soon discovered that Schubert was not of this class, and after he had heard some of his *lieder* he craved more of them.

The rapidity with which Schubert poured forth these songs was remarkable; if a thought came to him at night he would spring from his bed and at once write it out. One night he thus spontaneously composed

"Die Forelle" (The Trout), and reached sleepily for the sand-bottle, then used instead of blotting-paper, to strew sand over the copy, but grasped the *ink*-bottle instead; the result was that a tremendous blot was made over half of the completed manuscript; he was, however, too drowsy to rewrite the work at the time, and the next day, as was his wont, he cared too little about a completed song to take further pains with it. He sometimes forgot his own compositions; once, for example, he sent Vogl one of his songs, which the baritone found too high for his voice; Vogl, therefore, sent it to a copyist to have it transposed; a short time afterward Schubert saw the work, written in a strange hand, and ran it over. "Look here, Vogl," he cried; "this is a very good song! *Who wrote it?*"

There are many anecdotes regarding rapidity of composition connected with this or that composer, but many of them, when

sifted by the historian, prove to be untrue. The rapidity with which Händel composed "The Messiah" is a historical fact, and so is the story of the creation of "Hark, Hark, the Lark," by Schubert. It was a summer morning in 1826, that Schubert was returning from a long pleasure walk (*Spaziergang*) in the suburbs of Vienna, with a party of friends; they had been out to Pötzleindorf, and were walking through Währing, when, as they passed the restaurant "Zum Biersack," Schubert looked in and saw his friend Tieze, sitting at one of the tables; he at once suggested that the party enter and join him at breakfast, which was accordingly done. As they sat together at the table, Schubert took up a book which Tieze had brought with him; it was Shakespeare's poems in a German translation; he began turning from page to page in his usual insatiable search for subjects for musical setting; suddenly he paused and read one of the

poems over a few times. "If I only had music-paper here," he cried, "I have just the melody to fit this poem." Without a word, Doppler, one of his friends, drew the musical staff on the back of the bill of fare and handed it to the composer, and on this bill of fare, while waiting for breakfast, amid the clatter and confusion of a Viennese out-door restaurant, Schubert brought forth the beautiful Aubade, or Morning Song, "Hark, Hark, the Lark!"

In 1818 Schubert received the appointment of music-teacher to the children of Prince Esterhazy; it was not a very brilliant position; there were two children, Marie, aged thirteen, and Caroline, aged eleven. The task took Schubert to the summer residence at Zelesz, in Hungary, during some months of the year, and the influence of these sojourns can readily be perceived in the Hungarian tinge, the gypsy coloring, existing in much of his instrumental music and espe-

cially in the second movement of his great Symphony in C major. At the Esterhazy Castle he also met a most cultivated amateur, Baron Schoenstein, who sang his *lieder* with an intelligence that no opera singer of that time would have rivalled. Schubert was also able to give musical soirées in the castle, and even large works were occasionally produced here under his supervision.

At the castle he seems to have associated with the servants by preference, for Schubert was never quite at his ease with the aristocracy. His happiest days were spent among the *bourgeoisie* of upper Austria. Yet it is stated, although by no means proven, that he, at a later epoch, cherished a hidden passion for the young countess, Caroline Esterhazy, which, however, was never spoken.

At the end of the summer he was back in Vienna, and happy with the circle of companions which had gathered around him. This circle deserves a few words of descrip-

tion, for it may show that Schubert's life was not an unhappy one, that he had some pleasures which mere money cannot buy, that he lived in an ideal Bohemia.

In the first place, there was a whole coterie of musicians which met on Sundays and played concerted music together. For this gathering Schubert wrote much of his instrumental music, among which the earlier symphonies were the most important works. At one time the little orchestra had no trumpets or kettledrums, which accounts for the absence of these instruments in one of the master's symphonies.

Then there came an addition to the more intimate circle, for the tenor, Frans Jäger, became acquainted with the song-writer, and was bold enough (February 18, 1819) to sing one of his songs — "The Shepherd's Plaint" — in public, when it made an instantaneous success, and caused his other compositions to be sought for.

But above all, there was a circle of litterateurs, painters, poets, musicians, all great men in embryo, who came together in the most jovial fashion. This was more than a mere "Kneipe" (a bacchanalian gathering), for many of the comrades lived together, and shared their poverty in the most light-hearted manner. There was Hüttenbrenner, Jenger, Schwind, Mayrhofer (the one melancholy member), Lachner, Spaun, and some others. It may be at once admitted that they were a shiftless and unpractical lot. What set of young artists would have been otherwise? When they had money they drank champagne, when famine ruled they took to sugar water! It was a Commune in the fullest sense of the term, and all their slender property was held in common. When one of the comrades had money, all were sure of sharing in temporary luxury; thus, Schubert once sold a number of his songs to a publisher, and that night the

whole set went to hear Paganini, the great violinist, at a little over two dollars a ticket; the next day the customary famine was resumed. If one of the coterie had an important visit to make he borrowed the best hat, boots, and coat that the community afforded. Schubert, during one of the impecunious periods, was unable to find his wooden spectacle case; after searching high and low for it, he came upon Moritz Schwind placidly using it as a pipe bowl; there was tobacco, but no pipe, and no money for a pipe, wherefore a hole bored into the wooden case and the insertion of a tube made an acceptable substitute!

Schubert was the recognized leader in these Bohemian circles; in his honor they called their social gatherings "Schubertiades;" whenever some one introduced a new member to the circle our composer's first question was "*Kann er Wass?*" ("Does he know anything?" — *i. e.* in art.) So that

they came to call Schubert by the nickname of "Kannerwass."

When they were together at the tavern, Schubert was full of playful pranks; he would slyly break some of the dishes when the user of them was not watching, he would cause the waiter to guess the amount of his score, and when he was in the best of moods he would wrap a comb in paper and blow forth the "Erl-king" with the most exaggerated pathos.

Schubert was one of the most modest and one of the sweetest of natures. His was a soul absolutely without jealousy, entirely without envy. He was utterly unable to thrust himself forward. He reverenced Beethoven in the highest degree, yet, during all the many years that the pair dwelt together in Vienna (and they were often in the same restaurant together), he never plucked up courage enough to endeavor to make the acquaintance of his idol. A single interview

brought about by his publisher and a short visit to Beethoven during his last illness, were empty of all real result.

Utterly incapable of managing business affairs, Schubert was the easy prey of all the music publishers that he ever came in contact with. He sold to Diabelli, for example, over seventy songs in one lot, among which was the "Wanderer," for eight hundred florins; the firm realized over twenty-seven thousand florins from the "Wanderer" alone.

As a pianist, Schubert was an expressive player, but possessed no great amount of technical skill. He once attempted to play his own fantaisie, Opus 15, to some friends; after breaking down twice, he sprang from the piano in a fury, exclaiming, "Das Zeug mag der Teufel spielen!" ("The devil himself couldn't play such stuff!")

There is not much doubt that his most spontaneous vein of composition lay in the direction of his songs, for here his lack of

contrapuntal knowledge did not stand in his way so much as it would in the composition of symphonies or of sonatas, yet Dvořak boldly states that he believes Schubert to be greatest in his instrumental works. One may dissent from this opinion for the reason that development of figures is the keystone of symphony, sonata or string quartette, and just in such development was Schubert deficient; his symphonies, sonatas, and chamber compositions charm by their melody chiefly. They are disguised songs, poetic tunes placed in artistic contrast, but not perfectly welded forms such as Beethoven and Brahms have given in their large instrumental works.

The dark days were coming upon Schubert speedily enough. He composed so rapidly that the publishers felt that they were overstocked with his works and began to refuse them, and he was too little known to command any foreign markets for his wares.

The price dropped painfully. Some of the glorious songs in the "Winterreise," composed in 1826, were actually sold at *twenty cents apiece!*

In 1827 came the death of Beethoven. Schubert had visited his idol on his death-bed, and also attended the funeral. On the return from the cemetery a few of the mourners stopped at an inn, and drank a glass of wine to the memory of the dead composer, when Schubert suddenly proposed a toast to the next great tone-master who should die; it was a toast to himself, for he very soon followed Beethoven.

It is a pity that Heine only began to grow famous as Schubert was nearing the end of his career, for the poet was just the inspiration needed by the composer of *lieder.* Even as it is, some of the best of Schubert's latest songs were inspired by the poems of Heine. "The City," "The Fishermaiden," or "Am Meer," may show what Heine

could have done for Schubert had their careers been more entirely contemporaneous.

In 1827, after the Beethoven funeral, Schubert went to Gratz on a pleasure tour with Jenger. It was his last great enjoyment, for here he came in contact with some of the sturdy farmers of that region, and seems to have entered heartily into the life of the middle classes, which he always preferred to high society. It is interesting to notice that when Schubert was enjoying life heartily, he composed very little (with Schumann it was exactly the opposite), and his best works, composed in the latest years, were written amid gloomy surroundings. He himself complained that the public seemed to love those songs best which he had brought forth in greatest misery. It is too often true in music that "the anguish of the singer makes the beauty of the strain."

Schubert's greatest instrumental work, the Symphony in C, was written in the last year of his life. In this colossal work he appears to be more careful than was his wont.

His friends had often reproached him with his lack of care in composition, and had cited the great painstaking of Beethoven to him as a model. "Go ahead," he would reply, "pitch into me;" but it is evident that he had taken their advice to heart, for in this symphony he made extensive alterations, especially in the scherzo, after the score had been completed. He had failed in the direction of opera, his beautiful "Unfinished Symphony" had received no call for its completion, and now this masterpiece also fell flat, being regarded as too difficult to play, and not sufficiently interesting. The whole work came very near being lost to the world; it was many years after that Schumann discovered the score, with its accumulated dust, an un-

known, forgotten composition, and sent it up to Leipzig to Mendelssohn, who caused it to be placed upon the Gewandhaus repertoire.

Schubert now felt that he was handicapped heavily by his lack of contrapuntal knowledge. "It is not too late yet," he said, cheerily, to some of his friends, and almost the last active work of his life was to arrange for lessons in counterpoint with the celebrated Sechter; the days for the lessons were set, the text-book chosen, and Schubert departed, — to die.

It was on the evening of October 31, 1828, that he was sitting at his supper in the tavern where he often took his meals, when suddenly an intense loathing of food came upon him. From that time until his death he scarcely partook of any nourishment. On the 11th of November he wrote a pathetic note to his friend Schober, describing his loneliness and begging some books to read. He was delighted with

some of the Leatherstocking Tales by J. Fenimore Cooper, and hoped that Schober could obtain some more of Cooper's novels for him. He was growing weaker and weaker, and, like Mozart, seems to have been attacked by typhus fever, or something akin to it. Schober did not immediately reply, for he, in common with the whole circle of Schubert's friends, had never known the composer to be ill, and fancied it to be some slight and passing indisposition. It is a pathetic addition to the misery of this time that the sick composer was reading the proofs of the most mournful and sad set of songs that he ever wrote, — "Die Winterreise," — a sorrowful adjunct to his melancholy mood.

He suffered no pain, but he was extremely depressed and weak. Only Randhartinger, of all the Bohemian circle, came to see him during these last days. His loving brother Ferdinand hurried to him, when he learned

of the dangerous state he was in, and stayed with him. Delirium now set in intermittently. A few days before the beginning of the illness, Schubert had heard Beethoven's C sharp minor Quartette, and it had made a deep impression upon him; he now began to rave about this composition, and thought that Beethoven was in the room. Then he imagined that his quarters were changed, and was unhappy at the absence of Beethoven. Then came a lucid moment, and, turning to the doctor, Schubert said, solemnly, "Here, here is my end!" and mournfully turned his face to the wall. At three o'clock on the afternoon of November 19, 1828, Schubert's short life ended.

He was thirty-one years old. He left goods valued at sixty-three florins, — not enough to bury him, — but his loyal brother Ferdinand, who had never wavered in the belief that his Franz was a genius, helped from his scanty store, that the burial might

be worthy. The sweet and guileless character of Schubert also existed in the nature of the humble brother who believed in him.

The epitaph by the poet Grillpärzer is a very just one:

> "Fate has buried here
> A rich possession, but yet greater promise."

Some dense quibblers have found fault with this, but it is absolutely exact. Schubert attained much "by the grace of God," but had he also carried out his final plans of study he might have become the greatest of all the composers. Some careless commentators have accused Schubert of being very dissipated; he drank wine and beer with some avidity; he was neither a prig nor a debauchee. The statement already made in behalf of Mozart may also stand in defence of Schubert; his long list of works gives the lie to those who would make him out to be a mere dissipated

wretch. He was fond of meeting his friends at Bogner's Coffee House, and the libations and jollity which he indulged in there were entirely in accordance with the customs of his time. One cannot refrain from likening his career with that of the most natural of poets, Robbie Burns; both were the minstrels of the people, both sang in "native wood-notes wild," and if there were traces of weakness or fault in the two men one could say, with equal justice of both:

> "The light that led astray
> Was Light from Heaven."

CHAPTER VII.

CHOPIN AND THE MODERN PIANO COMPOSERS.

FREDERIC CHOPIN.

We have seen that all the great tone-masters have won their successes in various departments of musical composition. We now come to an exception to this rule; Frederic Chopin achieved all his successes in a single line of composition, — pianoforte music. His attempts at orchestration are failures, his two concertos are very badly scored, and his songs, posthumous works, are beautiful piano compositions, with poetry attached.

Chopin might well be called the discoverer of the modern piano. It was but natural that such a discoverer should come; the

FREDERICK CHOPIN.

piano had undergone enormous changes since its invention by Cristofori in 1709; Domenico Scarlatti had brought in cross-hand effects, modern homophony and a bravura style applicable either to spinet or piano; Philipp Em. Bach had established a sensible system of fingering in a book published in in 1752; Beethoven had turned the scales against the weak embellishments which the French clavecinists had fastened on spinet and piano music alike; Clementi, Czerny, and Moscheles had led technique forward to keep pace with an instrument that was constantly being improved, but Chopin suddenly revealed to the world the capabilities of one of its most versatile musical instruments.

Chopin was French on the father's side, Polish on the mother's, and in character a combination of the two races, Parisian to the finger-tips in his elegance, Polish to the heart in love of country and intensity of emotion.

He was born at Zelazowa Wola, near War-

saw, Poland, probably March 1, 1809. As a child he had an aversion to the piano, but began studying music at an early age, nevertheless. Zywny was his only teacher, and must have been an excellent one, for the boy was able to appear in public at nine years of age, on the very instrument which he had disliked a short time before. Joseph Elsner was his only teacher in composition. From the very first Poland was very proud of its young pianist, and Warsaw called him "a new Mozart." There was contact with the aristocracy from the very beginning; Catalani heard him at ten years, and gave him a watch; the Czar listened to his playing a little later, and gave him a diamond ring. Meanwhile, his education was going on at the Warsaw Lyceum where the father taught French. The lad was a wild boy, full of mischief and juvenile pranks. He remained in Warsaw until young manhood. In 1825 he published his Opus 1, the Rondo in C

minor. In 1827 he left the Lyceum and took up music as his life-work.

Opus 2, a set of variations on Mozart's duet in "Don Giovanni," — "La Ci Darem la Mano," — carried his fame beyond Poland, for there was a generous critic, Robert Schumann, in Leipzig, who discerned the promise contained in the rather crude work, and began his review of it with the words, "Hats off, gentlemen! A genius!" The work was published by Haslinger, in Vienna. In 1829 the composer went thither and gave a concert, and subsequently a second one, neither yielding any profit.

At this early epoch he wrote his concerto. Some of his music was inspired by his affections, *a la* Beethoven. He says that thoughts of the beautiful vocalist of Warsaw, Constantia Gladkowska, inspired the Adagio of the F minor Concerto, — and he ought to know. There were plenty more of such inspirations in his career, not always the

highest in music. But Chopin was the absolute slave of his emotions, and his music sometimes shows this ; there is a *morbidezza*, a lack of combativeness, very different from the spirit of Beethoven. Field unjustly called him "a talent for the sick-room!" — but he might rather be called the feminine (not the effeminate) in music.

Chopin travelled slowly from Vienna towards Paris, making many aristocratic friends by the way. He said that he was going "to the United States via Paris," but once in the French metropolis he stayed there, and one shudders to think of what the delicate composer would have suffered if brought in contact with the musical barbarism of our country in 1831. At this time Warsaw was captured by the Russians, and Chopin's sorrow over the event may be contemplated in his Etude in C minor, Opus 10, No. 12, it being always borne in mind that his Etudes are not to be regarded as study-

exercises, but as the sketches of an artist are "studies" of a subject.

In Paris he was immediately made very much of; although Kalkbrenner was then the fashionable teacher in the city, Chopin soon rivalled him in popularity. He gave many lessons, and at the highest prices, but as he lived "*en prince*," wore white kids at lessons, had his valet attend him, came and went in a carriage, he was always more or less pressed for money. To gain further prestige he took a few lessons of Kalkbrenner; but at his concert, February 26, 1832, Mendelssohn said of the pianist, "Chopin is worth twenty Kalkbrenners!" Liszt was among his friends at this time, and Chopin was publishing right along, winning a reputation that very speedily became world-wide. His E minor Concerto, however, met with a cold reception in Paris, and after that he detested the concert-room, appearing publicly as little as possible.

In 1835 he went to Carlsbad, Dresden, and Leipzig, making many friends, among them Schumann and Clara Wieck. In 1837 there came a trip to London. It was in this year that he met Madame Dudevant, "George Sand," and this friendship, or rather love, was to exert a great influence upon his career and his music. At the home of George Sand he constantly met with Liszt, Heine, and the greatest artists and litterateurs of France and Germany.

It is unnecessary to give in detail the growth of the intimacy between Chopin and Madame Dudevant; it finally ended in a quarrel and rupture after Chopin, now an invalid, had sojourned a while with the great novelist at Majorca. Those who care to read George Sand's version of the affair can consult her novel "Lucrezia Floriani," in which Chopin is pictured under the name of "Prince Karol." Weak and dejected, yet in a frenzy, Chopin departed

for Paris; on his return to his deserted rooms he tried to calm himself by improvising at the piano; he saw visions, and imagined that the nobility of Poland were filing by in long procession; he viewed the cavalry marching out to war, and then grew afraid of his own mental state, and fled from the room. The result of this rhapsody was the great Polonaise in A flat, in which, Chopin has said, the recurring figure in the bass of the second part represents the tramp of the horses.

In 1848 came the Revolution, and all continental Europe seemed convulsed with the throes of liberty. Chopin's pocket-book grew rapidly empty, and, as there was but one great European nation free from the storm, he went thither, and we find him in England, very weak and sick, but giving concerts in London, Manchester, and even in Glasgow. His illness grew apace, and he returned to Paris, only to die there, October

17, 1849. It is a Polish custom among noblemen to be buried in one's uniform; perhaps it was this that caused Chopin to direct that he should be buried in his concert costume.

Among the emotional composers Chopin may take first rank; he cared little for learned elaboration of form or of figures, and many of his best works are in the simple song-forms, or in song-form with trio, the so-called "minuet form." He was by no means great in applying the sonata form which Haydn, Mozart, and Beethoven had established, but the slow movements of his sonatas, where ingenious development would be out of place, are equal to any. He established the scherzo as an independent movement; his concertos are beautiful piano poems, not true concertos. His polonaises are the most national of all his compositions, and he becomes much more masculine than is his wont in por-

traying the glories of his native land in these. So long as emotional music is prized by mankind, so long is Chopin sure of an important niche in the temple of Fame.

LISZT AND RUBINSTEIN.

Although we depart from the chronological succession somewhat, it seems fitting at once to chronicle the results of Chopin's work. After his epoch piano music could not return to the primness of Clementi or the phlegm of Moscheles; a race of technicists sprang up, piano playing became more of a specialty, new points of technique were invented. The line began with its greatest exponent, Liszt, and Rubinstein, Taussig, Bülow, and others speedily followed; while in our own day D'Albert, Paderewski, and a host of others prove that the interest in this vein of work has not lessened. Of this list, however, only two seem to belong to the army of composers of fame, and the

title of the greatest of all pianists, Liszt, to a place among great composers may be much doubted. Yet he did much to further that school of piano treatment which Chopin had founded; he showed by his musical works that the possibilities of the instrument had not been exhausted.

Franz Liszt was born at Raiding in Hungary, October 22, 1811, his father being an officer in the service of Prince Nicholas Esterhazy. As a child his abilities on the piano were marvellous, and it is said (but by no means proved) that Beethoven heard the lad play, and, although he detested prodigies, gave him a kiss, saying, "He will make my music understood by posterity." At thirteen Liszt went to Paris, and fairly captured the French metropolis. From this time forth, until his death, Liszt was always more or less idolized. He was very handsome, very talented, very generous, and there was a vein of religious mysticism in

FRANZ LISZT.

his nature, which finally led him to become a dignitary in the Catholic Church. He claimed everything for the piano, and threw down the gauntlet to the doubters by playing Beethoven's symphonies in Leipzig, in a piano arrangement, not a very musicianly proceeding.

Adored by all of the nobility, more than one princess offered her wealth to the pianist, who was, therefore, placed far above all pecuniary cares. The charities of Liszt were boundless; the statue of Beethoven in Bonn owes its erection chiefly to him, who, by his writings, concerts, and contributions, made it feasible. His concerts in aid of the sufferers by inundation, in Buda-Pesth, caused suffering to be greatly ameliorated in that city; his efforts in behalf of Robert Franz caused that composer to enjoy a comfortable old age, instead of being afflicted by poverty; his aid to Wagner probably saved that composer and his later operas to the

world. A more generous musician never lived.

Just as Chopin was distinctly Polish in his music, Liszt was essentially Hungarian, and his rhapsodies and many other works brought the Magyar folk-music into the modern concert repertoire. Liszt was the most phenomenal pianist that ever existed, and was wise enough to retire from the concert-platform before his powers had begun to wane. Yet his ambition was to be considered as a composer rather than as a pianist; this reputation, however, will probably be denied him. His oratorio of "Holy Elizabeth," and his masses, show earnestness but not immortal genius; his two symphonies and his symphonic poems show great brilliancy of scoring, but fall short of being masterpieces; but the piano works of Liszt will always have a high position as illustrating an epoch in the development of virtuosity upon the instrument, and far removed as this technical work is

from the poetic piano dreams of Chopin, it yet arose because Chopin had unlocked the possibilities of the instrument.

Liszt also deserves commendation for his bold assertion of the dignity of musicianship. We have seen, in the lives of Mozart, Haydn, and Schubert, how low the caste of the musician was held to be less than a century ago. Liszt aided greatly to break these fetters. The Princess Metternich, after one of his concert tours, ventured to ask him whether he had done good business. "I am in music, your highness, not in business," was the crushing reply, which first gave voice to the dignity of our art. Liszt died July 31, 1886.

Anton Rubinstein was born of Jewish parents in Wechwotinetz, Moldavia, November 16, 1829, and died November 28, 1894. He was also one of the pianists who built the structure of modern technique, but he was a composer of high rank as well. Had he

always risen to the height of the first movement of his "Ocean Symphony," he would have been classed among the great composers, and not far from Beethoven, but he was an unequal writer, sometimes rising to great heights, but sometimes using very evident "padding" in his works. His father was Polish, his mother German, therefore Rubinstein was not distinctively Russian, yet Russian influences moulded him, and he, too, shows, in some degree, the modern spirit of nationalism in music. His father and family were baptized to escape the shameful persecutions which Russia pours on the ancient race. His mother was his constant mentor (even tormentor) in music, and to his latest days he was somewhat afraid of her outspoken criticisms.

His chief teacher was Villoing, a rough but honest instructor, who refused all pay for his services in the matter. Rubinstein was refused admission to the Paris Conserva-

toire, as Liszt had been before him, probably because Cherubini, who was at the head of the institution, hated all prodigies. Liszt heard him at the piano, and exclaimed that he would be his true successor. Rubinstein was the first who brought the height of modern virtuosity to America, for he made a tour of our country in 1872. The national character of Rubinstein's music is not so marked as is the case with Liszt, not so thoroughly Russian as the operas of Glinka, or the orchestral works of the great Russian, Tschaikowsky. He himself used playfully to remark that he could not tell where he stood: "The Russians call me a German; the Germans call me a Russian; the Jews call me a Christian; the Christians call me a Jew. What am I?"

It is not necessary to give the full career of this modern composer, who died greatly honored by the Czar and by all Russia. He became head of the St. Petersburg Conserva-

tory, and had much influence upon the progress of that school of piano playing, which was the result of the revelations of Chopin.

One other man greatly assisted this modern school of romantic and beautiful piano work, this was Robert Schumann; but as he also became one of the world's great composers we must reserve an examination of his deeds for an especial chapter.

CHAPTER VIII.

MENDELSSOHN AND SCHUMANN.

These two masters were contemporaries and opposites, very much as Händel and Bach had been in the preceding century, and fate has played see-saw with their relative positions in the world's appreciation very much as it has done with the valuation of the two earlier and greater composers. At present, probably because of the attacks of Wagner, Mendelssohn is ranked too low; during his lifetime he was undoubtedly regarded with an exaggerated esteem, and held to be greatly the superior of Schumann. In these days, when every young composer rushes through the thorn-bush of dissonance, when diluted Wagners are found on every side, it is wise

to study a composer who loved form and elegance of expression, who maintained symmetry even in his most dramatic and passionate moments. Such a man was

FELIX MENDELSSOHN-BARTHOLDI.

The name is a compound, the "Bartholdi" coming from his mother's family. The family was a Jewish one on both sides, but conversions had crept in and the grandson of the great Hebrew philosopher, Moses Mendelssohn, was bred amid Christian influences. Mendelssohn was born in Hamburg in 1809, he died in Leipzig in 1847, another name in the long list of composers who died in the fatal fourth decade of their existence.

The right of Mendelssohn to a place among the great geniuses of music may be questioned; he was, unfortunately, not tried in the fire of adversity as Schubert, Schumann, Beethoven, Bach, and others of the really great composers had been. His life was a

FELIX MENDELSSOHN

comfortable one from beginning to end. As well demand of a painter who has never seen the ocean to depict a storm at sea, as of a composer who has not suffered to portray the depths of emotion. There was generally a fatal suavity in Mendelssohn's works which prevented them from becoming entirely great.

Mendelssohn's father, Abraham, was a well-to-do banker; he was the son of the great Moses Mendelssohn and thus occupied the position of the prosaic mule between two valuable panniers; he himself recognized this position and used to say: "Formerly I was regarded as the son of my father, now I am looked on as the father of my son!" But he was a man of great practicality and sound common-sense, and there is no prettier picture in musical history than that of the family life of the Mendelssohns as revealed in Mendelssohn's own letters. He and his elder sister Fanny were the closest of chums, and it is delightful to read of their piano practice

together while the gentle mother, who guided the work, sat by and wondered at what she called their "Bach fugue fingers."

The musical education was most thorough, the strict Zelter being the teacher of counterpoint and composition, and other eminent teachers being their guides in violin and advanced piano work, although all these branches were pursued with no intention of making music a career but rather as the adjuncts of a liberal education. French, English, Italian, Latin, Greek, dancing, mathematics, and other branches of general culture were pursued as well, while tours to Paris, Switzerland, Italy, etc., rounded out an excellent education.

When at last the boy begged that he might devote himself altogether to music, the father very sensibly did not vehemently oppose the plan, but practically began to sift the lad's abilities in this direction, and, once convinced that his son possessed great talent for com-

position, he withdrew all objection, and set himself about making the training as thorough as possible.

There were indications of absolute genius in some of the early works; if Mendelssohn could not present stormy gusts of passion he was at least a master of daintiness, and not one of the great composers has surpassed him in exquisite playfulness such as he constantly displays in his scherzo movements. This playfulness is the chief characteristic of his first great orchestral work, the overture to "Midsummer Night's Dream," which was composed when Mendelssohn was but seventeen years old. The great octette for strings also belongs to this epoch.

Mendelssohn was thoroughly grounded in Bach, and a choir was formed for the practice of the works of this master at his own house (his father had previously often hired an orchestra for his son's advancement in conducting), and this finally led to a great public

performance of Bach's St. Matthew "Passion Music," March 11, 1829, under the youth's own direction. This may be counted as one of the great deeds in music, for Bach had become merely a shadowy name in Germany at this time, even the "Well-tempered Clavichord" being somewhat underrated, while the other works of the great master were allowed to rest in obsolescence.

After this performance the great Bach revival took place throughout all Germany; just as the world owes much to Colley Cibber for leading it to a Shakespearian revival, it has a debt to Mendelssohn for leading it to a clearer appreciation of Bach. After the great success of the "Passion Music" Mendelssohn for a single time alluded to his Hebraic origin: "It was a Jew who gave this great Christian work back to the people," said he.

A tour to England followed, and here Mendelssohn experienced something akin to idolatry; his London reception was wildly

enthusiastic. His trip extended northward to Scotland, and this had a direct influence upon his music. Almost all of the modern German composers have endeavored to write music in the Scottish manner, but only Mendelssohn has succeeded in acquiring the true Scottish lilt; the scherzo of his "Scotch Symphony" may be regarded as the most Scottish work ever achieved by a German. The Scottish tour also resulted in the "Hebrides Overture," in which the lonely Isle of Staffa and Fingal's Cave is depicted. The entire chief theme, fully scored, was sent as a letter from Scotland to his beloved sister Fanny. "This is the way the island impresses me," wrote the young composer. The subsequent tour to Italy produced the "Italian Symphony."

Soon after we find the composer happily married and living in Leipzig, full of musical work. Among the most important labors of this time may be mentioned the conducting

of the Gewandhaus orchestra (Mendelssohn may justly be called the first really great conductor of orchestra), and the founding of the great conservatory. His works were now known throughout the entire world. Among them we may mention, as the most important, the two symphonies alluded to above (there were three others), the glorious "Hymn of Praise," the most lofty modern oratorio of the whole repertoire, — "Saint Paul," — and, finally, his most dramatic work, "Elijah." His overtures are perfect in their way, and may stand as models of their kind. "Programme Music" is instrumental music which attempts to give a definite picture; it is not the highest function of music (except in vocal forms), to give such pictures. Mendelssohn followed the lead of Beethoven (who in his weakest symphony, the "Pastoral," attempted programme music), and made all of his overtures in this school; hence he was called

the great musical *Paysagiste.* His overtures are delicate landscapes or sea-pictures. the best examples of a school which cannot be called the best.

"Elijah" was the chief cause of the death of Mendelssohn, as "The Seasons" killed Haydn, or the "Requiem" killed Mozart. It was written for the Birmingham festival of 1846, but he revised the work after its performance to within a very short time of his own death. The labor and excitement of composition were too much for his weak frame. The death of his sister Fanny (who had married the famous painter Hensel) nearly gave him his death-blow. A severe trouble in his head existed during the time of the Birmingham performances, and grew much worse thereafter. He returned to Leipzig to die. His death occurred November 4, 1847, and all the world mourned his loss.

Mendelssohn falls short of the grandeur

and dramatic force of the greatest composers; but when the reaction from Wagner's attacks upon the Jew in music shall set in, the world will judge more fairly the sunny nature which speaks in Mendelssohn's compositions. One school of music does not abolish another, Wordsworth and Milton may coëxist in literature, and the symmetrical Mendelssohn may be appreciated in spite of the intensity of a Wagner, or the rugged power of a Beethoven. And it would be difficult to find a composer who has ever united the formal and exact style of the old masters of music with modern melody so well as Felix Mendelssohn.

ROBERT SCHUMANN.

It is too early to do full justice to the peculiar genius of Schumann; his music is too subtle and subjective to be readily grasped by the many even to-day. Liszt has summed him up with, "Schumann is

ROBERT SCHUMANN.

the greatest music thinker since Beethoven;" Wagner has said, "Schumann has a tendency towards greatness;" the laudation contains more truth than the sneer in this case. Composers have never been the best judges of other composers; thus, for example, Mattheson belittled Händel, Händel sneered at Gluck, Weber laughed at Beethoven, Beethoven said that "Weber never got beyond the art of pleasing," Cherubini handed back Berlioz's compositions with the slang remark, "Nix Verstay," Mozart called Abt Vogler a charlatan, and a host of other false judgments might be cited.

Schumann was a plant of slow growth, the pioneer of romanticism in music, a rebel against the formalism that, after the death of Beethoven, seemed settling down upon German music, the founder of a new school. The greatest barrier in Schumann's path was his contemporary described at the beginning of this chapter; a fine melo-

dist, a thorough contrapuntist, a true formalist, Mendelssohn seemed the very Tennyson or Wordsworth of music, while here was its Walt Whitman. Whether Mendelssohn was personally opposed to Schumann's advance may be doubted, although ill-natured remarks have been quoted which would go to show that the jealousy, which was almost the only flaw in Mendelssohn's character, was active against his competitor. Yet, even without any active opposition, the two composers were instinctively antagonistic in their methods and in their works. With Mendelssohn form came first; with Schumann last, or not at all.

Schumann was born at Zwickau, in Saxony, June 8, 1810. His father was a publisher in fairly good circumstances, a man of some literary attainment and poetic gifts, although what is called a self-made man. There was a vein of hypochondria in the family, and Schumann's sister died in her twentieth year

of an incurable melancholy. The boy exhibited a strong tendency towards literature in his early years, and wrote blood-and-thunder plays, which were produced by his playmates under his direction. His musical education was not neglected, but he received only that amount of piano instruction which is given to almost every child among the middle and upper classes in Germany, without any idea that the art of music was to form his life career. Yet the father seems to have suspected that there was more than ordinary musical talent in his son, for he wrote to the great Carl Maria von Weber asking that he might take his boy as a pupil; Weber consented, but for some unknown reason (probably the opposition of the mother) the plan came to naught.

The death of the father when Schumann was sixteen was an irreparable loss. The mother and the guardian, a merchant named Rudel, decided upon the law as the profession

best suited to the youth, who acquiesced in this decision, and was thereupon entered as a student in the Leipzig University.

"The best laid schemes of mice and men
Gang aft agley."

The Leipzig sojourn was to rivet the love of music upon him more than ever before, for here he met Frederic Wieck and his prodigy-daughter Clara; the former was to lead him into the musical profession, the latter was to become his wife.

Schumann was a strange and romantic compound at this time, and even thus early the terrible legacy of melancholia began to show itself.

He began to have a decided distaste for the study of law. He had come strongly under the influence of the mystical philosopher, Jean Paul Richter, and had an enthusiasm for the poetry of Heine (he had met the poet personally), which were excellent inspirations for musical composition, but

very poor stimulants for legal studies. He was working at the piano under the guidance of Wieck.

At this time Schumann utterly refused to have anything to do with the study of musical theory; he held that if a man had the true feeling for music he would not commit any great faults in composition. He lived to entirely recant this opinion, and to repent that he had not taken greater pains to conquer harmony and counterpoint in his youth.

Schumann was now well known in Leipzig circles as a young man with much skill in piano playing; he was tending towards a virtuosity somewhat tempered and refined by his poetic nature. He wrote many compositions "by ear." The next year he spent in Heidelberg, and as his legal professor, Thibaut (the author of "Purity in Music"), was a man of fine musical perceptions, the student drew musical, rather than legal, pabulum from him. But in July, 1830, he

suddenly seemed to come to his senses, and to recognize that his existence was altogether too aimless; the choice must be made, in fact he had already unconsciously made it. Law was hopeless to him, music was full of promise; the result was an earnest letter to his mother, setting forth the whole state of the case. The answer was a model of motherly timidity. Was Schumann sure of himself? Would he be happy in so unremunerative a career? And finally Wieck himself should be the judge, and Madame Schumann wrote to him impressing upon him his great responsibility in making the decision. Wieck prophesied Schumann's success in a musical career, and the important step was definitely taken, much to the vexation of the worthy guardian, Rudel, who allowed an angry silence to stand for consent.

Schumann had not yet changed his views regarding the uselessness of theoretical study, and therefore his whole attention was now

turned to piano study. As he found his fourth finger rather slow in development he hit upon a plan to hasten its progress. By a series of weights, ropes, and pulleys he rigged up a mechanism that placed a special muscular strain upon this unfortunate finger. He soon learned the value of the proverb, "Festina Lente," for his device succeeded in permanently laming his finger, and the lameness soon extended to his entire hand. The piano-playing career was at an end. As he had definitely committed himself to the musical profession he would not now turn back to the law; the once despised theory studies were taken up with ardor under the guidance of Heinrich Dorn. There are still in existence harmony studies by the young man of twenty-two, which contain false progressions and cross relations that prove that he was obliged to commence at almost the first stages of harmony; but the progress was very rapid and the final result sure. At this

time the death of his sister (a hypochondriac) plunged Schumann into a melancholy that threatened his reason. Possibly the very best escape from this grief was to work steadily, and we find the young man at twenty-four founding a musical journal that was to have an influence throughout Europe.

Germany had become hidebound in the classical forms after the death of Beethoven; the great tone-masters seemed to have become barriers in the path of art, because of the unreasoning fetish worship of a large tribe of pedants. Schumann gathered around him a circle of young radicals, and they began to protest against this state of affairs. In these attacks upon the old fogies Schumann was aided rather than hindered by his late study. A Mozart would have looked upon musical laws as immutable as those of the Medes and Persians; not so the young man who had studied them only after attaining his majority. "Die Neue Zeitschrift für

Musik," was the literary outcome of the meetings of the set of young reformers, and it began its crusade April 3, 1834.

Every young composer, being the most emotional of human beings, must needs fall in love early. In 1836 we find Schumann devoted to Ernestine von Fricken, and spelling out the name of the city she came from (Asch, — A, Es, C, H, — in our notation A, E flat, C, B) in a set of musical pictures called the "Carnival Scenes," — a very pretty love-letter. But this was like the passion of Romeo for Rosaline before the Juliet conflagration had set in; the life-passion followed soon after, and with incomparably greater intensity.

If there is any practice in musical literature to be reprehended, it is the custom of the dealers in bathos to add false coloring to the romantic episodes in the lives of the composers; in the case of Schumann it is like gilding refined gold or painting the lily,

—"a wasteful and ridiculous excess." The tale that Schumann wrote his "Warum" to his beloved during their enforced separation, and that it won him his bride, is utterly and atrociously false. The true love-tale, as earnest and noble as any from Héloise and Abelard to Paul and Virginia, is as follows: Schumann had come back to the Wiecks, and found the talented child Clara, no longer a prodigy, but an earnest artist and a lovely woman. He found her a sympathizing companion, a zealous supporter. She understood his subtle music, she comprehended his aims, and as they worked together a worthy affection grew up in both of them. The father was angry when he heard of this; he had prophesied Schumann's success in music when his anxious mother asked him to decide upon her son's career, in 1830, but in 1837 he found this altogether too dubious to allow him to give the hand of his daughter to the young aspirant.

Right sturdily did Schumann set himself about winning his bride; she had promised to wait for him while he conquered fortune, and therefore he set forth to the long battle with good courage. He went to Vienna, because he thought that his chances would be better there, but he found that the Viennese cared little for the dreamy, romantic composer.

While in Vienna, however, he found a dusty score, which proved to be Schubert's greatest symphony, and he saved this to the world; he also found a pen upon the grave of Beethoven, and, his mystical feelings being aroused, with this same pen he afterward wrote his glorious symphony in B flat, a worthy successor to the great Beethoven symphonies.

He gave a series of lectures at a college, and received the title of "Doctor" as an added honor; finally, in 1839, having won something of fame and a respectable income, he entered suit for the hand of Clara Wieck,

— not a love but a law suit. In Saxony it was permissible if two lovers were separated by the opposition of parents, if they were of age and there were no good cause to forbid marriage, to enter suit to compel the parents to show cause why the banns should be forbidden; if no impediment were shown, the court could "recommend" to the parents to give their consent, and the marriage was permitted. This was what took place in Schumann's case in 1839, and September 12, 1840, the faithful pair were married.

Music at once resulted from this union. Schumann always wrote most and best when he was happiest (in darker days melancholy would seem to crush out inspiration), and the wedding year of 1840 found him bursting into song, and telling of his happiness in "Poet's Love" ("Dichterliebe"), of his Clara's experience in "Woman's Life and Love" (a cycle that was prophetic, for the hero dies, and the widow lives on in mem-

ories), and besides these two greatest of German Song Cycles the contented husband composed his beautiful B flat symphony, also autobiographical music, which he originally intended to call "Spring Symphony," a pæan of triumph.

From the above the reader will readily surmise that Schumann was fond of giving his own experiences in his compositions; probably no other composer did this so directly as he. Studying his works from this standpoint, one is struck with the oppositional character of some of them; one does not, to be sure, find a Doctor Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, but one finds two characters quite as diverse. The key to this contrasted style is also to be sought in Schumann's own character; he said of himself that at times he was an aggressive radical, and at times a sensitive, introspective poet; he gave these characters names, and called the fiery nature "Florestan," the dreamer "Eusebius;" he often signed his

criticisms by these names, according to their moods, and some of his music carries one or the other signature, his first piano sonata both. In his literary work he evolved a third character which should mediate between these two oppositional ones, and he called this party "Master Raro." All these fancies show a dwelling in dreamland that was dangerous for a mind with the tendency towards insanity that existed here.

In 1843 we find Schumann a coadjutor of Mendelssohn in the new conservatory in Leipzig; here he was teacher of composition, and otherwise active. During a subsequent concert tour in Russia the symptoms of mental malady again showed themselves. In 1850 Schumann was appointed successor to Hiller at Düsseldorf, and the beautiful Rhine life seems to have benefited him somewhat. The "Cologne Symphony" was a result of his surroundings here.

But the improvement was only temporary,

and in 1853 the symptoms of mental alienation grew more pronounced. He began to attend spiritualistic séances, and imagined that Beethoven was trying to communicate with him by means of four knocks upon the table, — the figure of the first movement of the Fifth Symphony; he fancied himself haunted by Schubert, who begged him to finish the "Unfinished Symphony;" he imagined that the note "A" was always sounding in his ears, and gradually whole compositions seemed to grow above this continual organ-point; he thought that spirits brought him themes. February 27, 1854, he wrote down one of these themes (Brahms has set it as piano variations ending with a funeral march), and then came one of those dreadful lucid intervals in which he was conscious that he was going crazy; he rushed from the house to the river, and threw himself in with a hope of ending all his troubles; some passing sailors rescued him, but the shock was

too severe, and his mind gave way altogether; two years more he lingered on, an incurable patient at an asylum in Endenich. His wife was forbidden to visit him, for it seemed to excite his emotions too greatly to see her. He died July 29, 1856.

CHAPTER IX.

A BATCH OF OPERATIC COMPOSERS.

After the foundation of opera (1594–1600) there were many composers in countries widely separated who took up the new school of work; we have traced the Italian efforts to the time of their decadence and defeat by the superior work and theories of Gluck. In England the greatest musical genius that the country had ever produced, Henry Purcell (1658–1695), wrote more than fifty operas, copying the Italian school, and also being the first to introduce Italian terms of expression into English usage. A great organist, a thorough contrapuntist, far in advance of all other English composers in his grace and fluency of expression, Purcell deserves an

especial place in history as having been the composer of the melody (originally a quick-step) which became world-famous as "Lilliburlero," the war song of the Revolution of 1688. Lord Wharton, the author of the doggerel poetry, claimed that he had rhymed James the Second out of his dominions, but it was Purcell who, with his catchy melody, won the day for England, a triumph only second to that of Rouget de l'Isle, during the French Revolution, with his "Marseillaise."

In France Jean Baptiste Lully (1633–1687) founded an opera which was intertwined with comedy, tragedy, or ballet, according to the moods and commands of the Grand Monarque, Louis XIV. In evolving this species of entertainment Lully had the enormous advantage of collaborating with the "French Shakespeare" — Molière. Lully rose from the menial position of scullion in the kitchen of Mlle. de Montpensier to the high rank of favorite composer of the court of Louis XIV.

HENRY PURCELL.

He died honored and wealthy. His death was brought about by a peculiar accident: he was directing a rehearsal of his Te Deum, composed in honor of the king's recovery from an illness; he was an irascible man, a leader who had once broken a violinist's fiddle over his head because of an imperfect performance; things were not going well at this particular rehearsal, and Lully was pounding his long staff upon the floor (the mode of conducting music at that time) with extreme violence; suddenly he had the misfortune to strike his own gouty foot; gangrene set in, Lully refused to allow amputation, and the founder of modern French opera practically died of conducting.

Jean Philippe Rameau (1683–1764) developed the legacy which Lully had left to the French nation, and his boldness of modulation and dramatic instinct made him in some degree the precursor of Weber. As Rameau discovered the laws of chords and their for-

mation, he may be considered the father of modern harmony. He left a treatise upon this subject, which, although containing some errors, yet led Catel, Fetis, Godfrey Weber, Richter, and others to their more practical methods of harmony. His harpsichord works are also very important, and Rameau was an important reformer in the musical art, not only for the kingdom of France but for the entire world. Following him there comes a long and honorable line of composers in France, among whom can be named Grétry (1741–1813), whose "Richard Coeur de Lion" remains a gem of the modern repertoire; Mehul (1763–1817), favorite composer of the great Napoleon; Boieldieu (1775–1834), best of all the older French operatic composers, a Parisian Mozart; and in modern times Auber (1782–1871), and others who demand more extended notice.

Very many of the modern French composers came under the influence of a stern

and exacting teacher, who, in spite of some great errors of judgment, exerted a powerful influence upon advancing French art. This was an Italian who brought to France all that was best of the old contrapuntal schools.

CHERUBINI.

Luigi Carlo Zenobi Salvatore Maria Cherubini, whose name was somewhat shortened when in practical use, was born in Florence, in 1760, and was a pupil of Sarti. He was in England a short time, and had heard Gluck's French operas and Haydn's orchestral music, being influenced by both. He was in France in 1789, and saw the inception and progress of the Revolution, joining the National Guard, and writing Jacobin music, to avoid the chance of losing his head in the dangerous days of "The Terror." He was a harsh character and a most severe critic. He became head of the Paris Con-

servatoire, and not only rejected Liszt and Rubinstein, when these great artists were at the beginning of their careers, but also sneered at Berlioz, when that genius, in the Conservatoire, was giving proof of his bold flights in orchestral work.

A quarrel with Napoleon forced him out of composition for awhile, but during a subsequent sojourn in Belgium he again took up his work. After the restoration of the Bourbons the Conservatoire was reopened, and Cherubini again became its head. He now published his great work on counterpoint and fugue. He wrote some operas which Beethoven greatly admired, but his greatest works were in the sacred school, and Beethoven held these to be models of pure art. His requiem masses remain a monument of contrapuntal skill, and his pure, chaste style can be studied in the overture to "The Watercarrier," which is often heard in the modern concert-room.

As a man Cherubini was far more feared than loved, yet it must be confessed that his severe influence was very beneficial to France, and prevented a lapse into triviality, of which, in the early part of the century, there was some danger. He died in 1842. He had the courage to say to Boieldieu, when his "Caliph of Bagdad" had captured all Paris, "Are you not ashamed to enjoy such an undeserved success?" and the younger composer took the remark sufficiently to heart to become one of Cherubini's pupils, and eventually to produce greater works, as "La Dame Blanche," for example, as a consequence.

Auber was also a pupil of Cherubini, and was his successor in the directorship of the Conservatoire. In later days another composer of operas obtained the directorship, Ambroise Thomas (1811–1895), and carried still further the successes of the French operatic school. The most promising of all

of the moderns in France, however, Georges Bizet (1838–1875), died too young to give forth his full message to the art world. His music in "L'Arlesienne," and his opera of "Carmen," show him to have been the most promising composer of France, as Purcell was of England.

MEYERBEER.

Although Wagner has called Meyerbeer "a miserable music-maker," "a Jew banker to whom it occurred to make operas," one cannot dismiss Giacomo Meyerbeer with so harsh a verdict. Although a German his influence was so entirely exerted in France that a notice of his life falls properly in line with French operatic development.

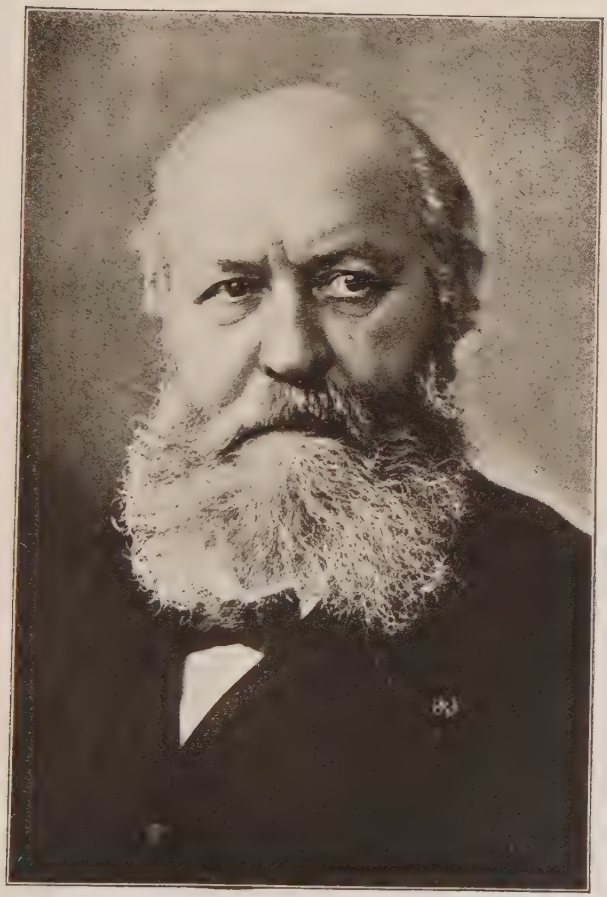
His name was Jacob Liebmann Beer. His father was one of the richest of German bankers, and the family was Jewish. All the family were talented in one direction or another. During his childhood one of the

rich uncles of the boy died, leaving him all his property on condition that the avuncular name of Meyer be added to the boy's name of Beer, whence came "Meyer-Beer." Meyerbeer was born in 1791 and died in 1863. His chief teacher was Abt Vogler, who also had the great Weber for a pupil. That Meyerbeer was dramatic cannot be doubted; that he was a master of orchestral resources is also indisputable; but he was not born to be a leader in art. He had approbativeness in the highest degree, and sought above all things immediate approval and applause; as a consequence he wrote down to his public, and never attempted to lead them. Such a man could not fail to be antipathetic to Wagner, who made the art-ideal his only religion.

Meyerbeer was fortunate in being able to secure the best librettists for his operas, and his two chief works, "Robert le Diable" and "Les Huguenots," show how keenly

alive he was to the dramatic opportunities they afforded to his muse. He was not of the stuff of which martyrs are made, yet he was able to rule French opera for many decades, and, spite of the great advance made in the operatic field, chiefly because of Wagner, his works are by no means obliterated, but are very frequently heard on the stage to-day. That Meyerbeer did not live up to his own highest musical ideals must be conceded even by his warmest followers; even the gentle Schumann grew indignant about some of his vulgarities in opera; yet he was an important influence in his time, and many who have abused him have not scrupled to appropriate some of his orchestral effects.

Herold and Halévy also may be mentioned among those who had an effect upon the French school of opera. Among the latest composers who worked in this field one may speak of Gounod and Saint Saëns.



CHARLES GOUNOD.

GOUNOD.

Charles Gounod, born 1818, died 1895, came of an artistic family, although the talents of his father and grandfather were exerted not in the domain of music, but of sketching, engraving, and painting. Gounod was a pupil of the Paris Conservatoire, and won the Prix de Rome (the greatest musical prize the world offers) at the French Institute in 1840. He had a strong tendency towards religion in his early years, and came so near to taking holy orders that "Abbé Gounod" was printed as the name of the composer on some of his music. This religious fervor returned to him in old age. His first important compositions, therefore, were masses, and these are far more earnest and genuine than the religious music which Gounod brought forth in his later accession of religious zeal.

His first operas were absolute failures, and

the non-success sent him back for a time to sacred composition. "Faust," however, changed all this; this opera was produced in 1859, and, strange to say, was not an immediate success. The verdict of critics and public soon became favorable, however, and after the Theatre Lyrique had produced the work four hundred times the Grand Opera House asked for it. It has been produced in Paris alone more than one thousand times. "Romeo and Juliet" was scarcely less of a popular success, and Paris has heard this opera over five hundred times. Gounod's other operas are eclipsed by these two successes, but all of them have some worth. His operatic composition seems to be a pleasant half-way house between the classical and the popular style, and his orchestral devices and his working up of climaxes are often admirable.

After a life that was very far from being religious, we find our composer in sacred work again, and his "Redemption" (1882)

and "Mors et Vita" (very much overrated works) prove the saying, "On revient toujours à ses premières amours."

CAMILLE SAINT SAËNS.

Saint Saëns was born in Paris, October 9, 1835. He began the study of music when he was scarcely three years old, exhibiting as early precocity as Mozart. He became a student at the Conservatoire, that institution which has done so much to develop the composers of its nation. Saint Saëns has written several operas which have won success, although they are by no means as popular or as easily comprehended as those of Gounod or of Thomas; but in his orchestral works the composer easily holds the first rank among all the modern French composers; he is a master of scoring, and his Symphonic Poems (they are not akin to symphonies, for in French the word "symphonique" simply means "orchestral") are excellent examples

of what can be done with the modern orchestra. Saint Saëns is one of the best organists now living, and his organ compositions are only second to those of Widor in the modern French school. The composer is one of the wealthiest of musicians, but possibly this same affluence, as in the case of Mendelssohn or Meyerbeer, prevents him from attaining the highest expression of emotion, which is born in some degree of the combats of life.

In Italy the development of opera, after the reforms of Gluck had checked the false direction of art, was somewhat in the nature of a retrogression. A genius came upon the scene just after Gluck had established his theories, whose misapplied abilities decidedly set back musical progress in the operatic field.

ROSSINI.

Gioacchino Rossini was born at Pesaro, February 29, 1792. By his admirers he is called "The Swan of Pesaro," but the Wag-

nerians by no means acquiesce in this title. His youth, passed amid the troubles of the Franco-Italian campaigns, was by no means a pleasant one, until, by his sweet voice, he was able to earn some money and gain musical tuition in Bologna. He had a fatal facility of composition which led him to pour forth opera after opera. In these works he was absolutely innocent of any knowledge of the theories of Gluck, which demanded dramatic significance of the music as well as beauty of melody or harmony. To illustrate the weakness of the brilliant school of Rossini, one need only to cite the bright and genial melody of "Cujus Animam" in his "Stabat Mater" where the sighs of the weeping mother are supposed to be pictured, or the showy fioriture of "Semiramide" which scintillate even in the most tragic moments of that opera. *Per contra* it must be admitted that sometimes Rossini united the sentiment of the poem with the music in

marvellous fashion; the "Quando Corpus" of the "Stabat Mater," the "Inflammatus" of the same work, the entire opera of "The Barber of Seville," almost the entire opera of "William Tell" show conclusively what a great leader in the development of dramatic expression in opera Rossini might have been, had he cared to take the true path.

Naples, Rome, Paris, finally the whole civilized world, fell under the spell of the charming melodies which the careless genius was pouring forth, and as the singers found the works very vocal and admirably calculated to display their talents, and as the public had no art-theories in particular, it is not astonishing that Rossini threw Gluck entirely into the shade and stood as a barrier to the success of Beethoven's one opera and of such other composers as were prating of "dramatic unity" or "fitness of things."

After successes in London and Paris, Rossini seems to have determined upon a

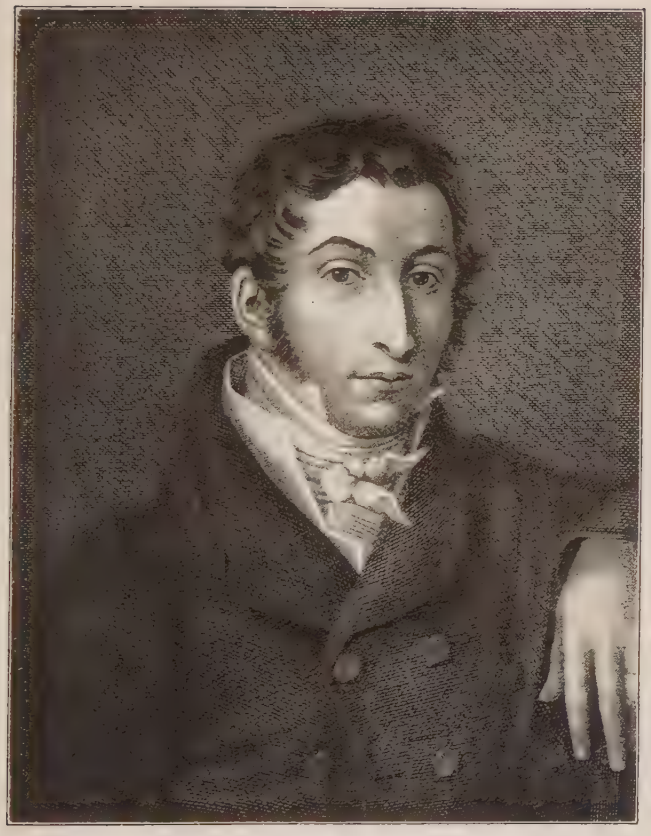
magnum opus, an opera that should display his capabilities to the utmost. "William Tell" was the result, and it was performed in Paris, August 3, 1829. In this opera Rossini seems to have definitely followed the path indicated by Gluck; there is no longer vocal display merely for the sake of display, there are no senseless roulades, the composer no longer fishes for the public with a melody-baited hook, but all is dignified, fitting, deeply dramatic. With this great art success Rossini retired from the operatic stage. His works had made him wealthy, and he probably felt that he could not go beyond the point he had attained. He died long after this, on the thirteenth of November, 1868; but, although he wrote much music after 1829, he could not be persuaded to attempt another opera after "William Tell," his masterwork.

Rossini led to a false school of operatic writing. Other composers seeing his success,

and believing that melody and vocal display were all that were necessary to make a good opera, wrote much that posterity needed to sift out. Bellini (1802–1835) followed with "Norma" and "La Somnambula," and died too young to regain the correct path, as Rossini had finally done. Donizetti (1798–1848) won the plaudits of the world with such works as "Lucia," "Linda di Chamounix," and other melodic and harmonious untruths, and carried on the Rossini half-truths to their legitimate conclusion. Poetry and music seemed almost divorced, or, at least, the latter became tyrant over the former. But a thunder-storm was coming to clear the atmosphere; already the premonitions of the tempest were heard in the operas which Germany was beginning to produce.

WEBER.

Kreutzer, Marschner, and Lortzing were significant straws as to the direction in which



CARL MARIA VON WEBER

German opera was progressing, but the true light of dramatic power and of orchestral efficiency arose in the works of Carl Maria von Weber. His was a school following the artistic laws which Gluck had laid down, and also calling to its aid the pure influence of the music of the people, the wild-briar rose of art, the folk-song.

Weber's father was a good musician, a spendthrift, a poor scion of an aristocratic family, and an unreliable character altogether. The boy was born at Eutin, December 18, 1786, although the date is questioned. He was an invalid from birth, and suffered all his days with a hip disease. He studied music at an early age, and Beethoven's satirical statement that Weber entered music so late that he could attain nothing beyond the art of pleasing is disproved by a set of fughettas, or fugal expositions, which the boy wrote at eleven years of age, and which still exist. The lad was bred in a theatrical

atmosphere from the very outset. His father was connected with the stage, and the young Weber came in constant contact with singers and actors. The theatrical flavor of even his sonatas is noticeable, and this footlight character is by no means to be regarded as a defect in his operas.

Weber's musical training, although begun early, was by no means regular. His chief teacher was the celebrated Abbé Vogler, whom Browning celebrated in verse, who taught Meyerbeer, whom Mozart cordially detested and called a charlatan, but who seems to have had success with his pupils, nevertheless. The same Abt Vogler was an eccentric character, who boasted, "I can make a composer in three weeks, and a good singer in six months." He certainly made a good composer of Weber in a short time.

Weber seems to have been a very wild and immoral youth. His indiscretions became so numerous that he was finally expelled from

the city of Stuttgart by the king's order. In 1810, however, there seems to have been a great and sudden change for the better, and the composer became more earnest and artistic. He married Caroline Brandt in 1817, and her pure influence upon him was of the most beneficial character.

In 1821 Weber became the operatic liberator of Germany. Instead of following the decadent Italian school, our composer set himself about writing an opera that should be distinctly German, and "Der Freischütz" was the result. This opera was produced in Berlin, June 18, 1821, and was a work to which the overused adjective "epoch-making" may be justly applied. There was a short battle, almost as vehement as the fight between Gluckism and Piccinism had been a half century before, and once more the higher art vanquished the lower. German opera was born.

Weber afterwards wrote "Euryanthe" for

Vienna, and, although handicapped by an absurd libretto, won fair success there. Here he met Beethoven, and a reconciliation was effected between the pair, who had been long estranged.

Weber was so thoroughly imbued with the spirit of German national music, that he was able to produce folk-songs that may almost be regarded as national hymns. Such a work is the stirring "Sword-song," set to the words which the great poet Körner wrote on the day before he met his death in battle:

"Thou sword at my side glancing,
What means this gleam entrancing?
Gazest with pride on me,
Say what can the meaning be?

"I am a freeman's treasure,
That fills thy sword with pleasure.
Where tyrants bar the way
There will we join the fray."

A poem which in verse after verse breathes forth the love of liberty, and in which there

was no *mésalliance* in the wedding of music to the words.

The death of Weber was a heroic one ; he was very ill when the munificent patron-city of art, London, sent for him to conduct one of his operas in England. Covent Garden Theatre offered one thousand pounds for the privilege of hearing "Oberon" for the first time, under the direction of the composer. Weber knew that he was near his end, but he wished to provide for his family, and therefore, invalid as he was, he led the first performance in London, April 12, 1826. Other English concerts followed. It was his last triumph. June 5, 1826, he was found dead in his bed, in London. He had won the prize for his wife, but had given up his life in the effort.

Weber's scoring is something especially brilliant ; he achieved new effects with the orchestra, such as even Beethoven could not understand. He loved the horns and the

clarinet, and these instruments owe some of their most striking effects to his discoveries. Following Gluck, it was a most natural thing that Weber should lead to a greater development in the same direction; he was the guide-post that pointed out the path to a still higher ideal, which afterwards culminated in some of the operas of Richard Wagner.

RICHARD WAGNER

CHAPTER X.

WAGNER: HIS LIFE AND THEORIES.

We have already stated the causes which made a reform in opera necessary, and we have seen how Gluck and Weber in some degree attempted this reform; but a more radical reformer was required, it needed an absolute iconoclast to break the fetters in which poetry was bound by music, it required a genius, and a bold one, to restore the proper relationship between the two arts. This genius was born in Leipzig, May 22, 1813, and was named Wilhelm Richard Wagner. His father, an actuary and chief of police of the city, died the same year. His mother married again, this time an actor

at the Dresden Theatre, named Ludwig Geyer, a man of artistic tastes and considerable ability, a stepfather who became a loving parent to the young boy, who had as yet shown no especial talent.

Like Schumann, Wagner ripened late; at seven he was able to strum a couple of simple tunes on the piano, and the stepfather, then lying on his death-bed, murmured: "I wonder if the boy has any talent for music." The talent then suspected never took the direction of technical ability, for to the end of his days Wagner was a most inferior performer.

During his childhood, which was chiefly spent in Dresden, the boy exhibited a strong tendency towards poetry; he wrote an ode on the death of a schoolmate, which was printed, and he concocted a terrific tragedy, a mixture of "King Lear," "Hamlet," and "Titus Andronicus," in which he was so sanguinary that he killed all his characters in the first act, and, not wishing to shorten

his play, caused their ghosts to return to carry on the rest of the tragedy.

In 1828, at the age of fifteen, Wagner went to Leipzig, to the Nicolai School. This was a most important trip, for he now attended the Gewandhaus concerts, and for the first time heard the symphonies and overtures of Beethoven. It was like the touch of a magician's wand; he at once became a musician, a composer. He tried to write music to his own blood-and-thunder plays, but found himself balked by a lack of knowledge; therefore he began taking lessons of Gottlieb Müller, a martinet who did not understand his pupil at all, but tried to turn the mountain torrent into a Dutch canal. The too strict enforcing of pedantic rules led to an explosion in which the pupil was even less respectful to his master than Beethoven had been to Haydn.

A second teacher had the wisdom to see that he was dealing with an exceptional

nature; this was Theodore Weinlig, cantor at the Thomas School (where Bach had taught), who led Wagner to an understanding of the methods of Mozart and other conservative masters. In about six months the training was completed, and this half year seems to have been all the teaching that Wagner ever received. But the reader must not be deceived by this statement; in "The Master-singers of Nuremberg" Wagner causes Walther to respond to the query as to where he had studied, "Walther von der Vogelweide was my master," whereupon the narrow-minded Beckmesser cavils, "A good master, but long since dead!" Wagner in the same manner had a teacher who had passed from the land of the living, for Beethoven was absolutely and almost entirely the teacher of the young aspirant, who studied his scores with an enthusiasm that soon made him the best Beethoven student in all Germany.

As a youth Wagner tried his hand at symphony, sonata, and overture; but he was not fitted for this symmetrical school, and his symphony and sonata seem almost puerile, and bear no comparison to his later works.

In 1833 we find the incipient composer in Würzburg occupied as chorus-master at the opera, all his family being more or less connected with operatic performances. His family at this time regarded him as a very unpractical person who was unlikely to win success in any branch of music. His first opera was now composed; it was founded upon the style of Auber and Bellini, whom the youth now regarded as stage models, and was entitled "The Fairies." It is a farrago of sensationalism which has now very sensibly been withdrawn from the stage; it presents every conventionality, a mad-scene, slumber-song, transformation-scene, etc., and in its music there is only now and

then a glimpse of the boldness of the radical. In listening to the performances of this work in Munich, in 1888, it was difficult to imagine that the creator of such an opera could ever make his mark in music; it was another proof of the lateness of Wagner's development. His second opera, "Das Liebesverbot," was a rather immoral perversion of Shakespeare's "Measure for Measure."

In 1834 Wagner became director at Magdeburg, where the bankruptcy of the theatre soon set in and forced him to wander further. We next find him (in 1836) at Königsberg, and the subsequent year at Riga. Here he married a beautiful actress, Wilhelmina Planer, whom he had followed from Magdeburg. This marriage led to no happy results, for Wagner demanded absolute homage from those around him, and a full belief in his powers, and this unhappy woman could not comprehend his genius; but poor Minna Planer was an uncomplaining

wife to him through all the dark days which followed, through the dismal voyages, through the semi-starvation in Paris; she sacrificed her own career without a murmur (she had been a very promising actress and singer), and became a household drudge amid the gloomiest surroundings. This counted for nothing with Wagner, who generally looked only at his own side of a question; he separated from his faithful helpmate in 1861, and Minna Planer died, isolated, in 1866. The ultra-Wagnerians have used a great deal of whitewash in this matter, but have not been able to obliterate the stain. Wagner was ungrateful here as he was in many other parts of his career; but we must learn to discriminate between the man and the artist; as a man Wagner had many base attributes, as an artist he was ready to lay down his life, to be tortured to death, for his ideal; there is no instance in the entire realm of musical history, not even in

the self-abnegating labors of Bach and Palestrina, of such entire and loyal devotion to an art-ideal; no man dare attempt to strike the balance between these two natures of a single being.

To return to Riga: Wagner was now beginning to develop his grandiose views in opera, although he had as yet attained none of his theories. He was composing a great heroic opera ("Rienzi") in 1838, and in the next year he determined to venture all in order to give this work its proper setting; he decided that the Paris Grand Opera was the only place where such a work could have its appropriate performance, and therefore set out on a voyage to that city accompanied by his wife, a large dog (Wagner was always very fond of animal pets), and the precious, though unfinished, score. Terrific storms twice threatened the party with shipwreck, and the composer was glad to stay in London awhile, before completing his journey.

This voyage was the seed whence sprang the graphic opera of "The Flying Dutchman."

In Paris he was met by disappointment on every side. Meyerbeer tried to assist him (Wagner once told a friend: "Had it not been for Meyerbeer my wife and I would have starved in Paris"), but the operatic managers held aloof. Writing musical articles for the press, arranging operas for piano, cornet, and what not, and the composition of some very fine songs, kept absolute hunger at bay. Meyerbeer induced Pillet, of the Grand Opera, to send for the young composer, but little came of it save that Pillet bought the libretto of "The Flying Dutchman" for five hundred francs.

In 1840 Wagner turned to Germany for help and sent his "Rienzi" to Dresden, where it was promptly accepted. It was the turning-point of his career; "Rienzi" made a tremendous success, and the days of struggle were apparently over. In 1841 the com-

poser was snugly installed as kapellmeister (conductor) in Dresden, and the future path seemed plain.

Here we come to another proof of Wagner's superb honesty in art matters. Some of the English Philistines have written animadversions upon Wagner, stating that his theories were born of pique and of inability to write in the regular paths of opera. "Rienzi" gives the lie to this absurd statement; all that Dresden wanted of Wagner was more of the same sort; but the composer was beginning to suspect that "Rienzi" did not represent the highest operatic art, and deliberately left the smooth path in which certain success awaited him, to push along the thorny road of reform; his "Flying Dutchman" (true dramatic ideal) disappointed many, although Spohr was made a convert by it; his "Tannhäuser" disappointed everybody.

Here was national opera, "German from

top to toe," continuity of action and music, dramatic meaning, yet the public would have nothing to do with it. Wagner did not recede (here, indeed, was the material of which art-martyrs are made), but pushed on still further towards the light. The absolute opposite of Meyerbeer, he cared not at all for the opinion of the public, but only for the advancement of music as he understood it. In later days he disavowed even these operas as not representing his full theories, but "The Flying Dutchman" and "Tannhäuser" may be accepted as examples of a purer and truer operatic vein than had before existed, in spite of the composer's interdict.

Still pressing forward, Wagner began sketching something even bolder in "Lohengrin," but there were to be stirring events between the inception of this opera and its completion. The revolutionary movement of 1848 drew Wagner into its vortex. Although there is some dispute as to how

closely the composer was associated with the radicals in this movement, there is little doubt that he made speeches urging that Saxony ought to be free and that he was at the barricades during the actual fighting in May, 1849. As a consequence, when the royal troops had dispersed the rioters, Wagner found himself proscribed and obliged to fly for his life; he fled to Weimar, to Liszt, who had known him in Paris, and who now and henceforth was one of his most devoted friends. Liszt smuggled him safely across the frontier, and Wagner hastened, via Paris, to Switzerland. A long period of exile was to ensue, but Wagner was no longer a starving neophyte. He was now a well-known composer and conductor, and the period of exile gave him just the required leisure to examine more thoroughly into the theories of art which he saw glimmering upon his horizon. He saw also that the public must be educated to a higher ideal, and began to

become a pamphleteer, as Gluck had been before him in a similar situation.

He did not confine his pamphlets to defining his music, but fiercely attacked whatever stood in his way. He found the public adoration of Meyerbeer a stumbling-block, and therefore not only attacked this composer but extended his virulence to his entire race, root and branch; his pamphlet on "Judaism in Music," an impeachment of the most musical race of the world as being unmusical, although published under a false name ("K. Freigedank"), was speedily traced home to Wagner, and had the effect of riveting the public attention to the strivings of a man who was so audacious.

Meanwhile a new factor in his advance had begun to exert itself; he had read the works of the pessimistic philosopher, Schopenhauer, and in these had found a confirmation of his views, and food for the evolution of new theories. The result was a new

school of music. As the public could not appreciate anything so much in advance of its accepted ideas, Wagner appealed to posterity and called his compositions "the music of the future;" but progress came more speedily than he had imagined. He lived to see his music on the very top wave of popularity, and "the music of the future" has very decidedly become "the music of the present." The theories on which this new school was founded are chiefly these:

1st. The abolition of conventional forms. That musical sandwich which is called the "Aria" found no place in Wagner's later works; he desired that the composer should not be trammelled by an architectural plan.

2nd. Continuity and unity. The opera was not to subdivide itself into "a string of pretty pearls," but was to be one large indivisible gem. The music was to flow on continuously, and all such divisions as give rise to interpolated applause, encores, etc.,

were abolished; a vast step in the right direction.

3rd. The proper union and relationship of poetry and music were insisted upon. One cannot too strongly praise this point, which Gluck had first explained, but which Wagner riveted on modern opera. He impressed this truth in many ways in his pamphlets, and still more effectively in his works. "Music is the handmaid of poetry;" "In the wedding of these two arts, poetry is the man, music the woman;" "Poetry must lead, music must follow;" these were a few of the apothegms which may be found in Wagner's writings. Herbert Spencer had arraigned certain kinds of songs in these words: "They are compositions which science would forbid. They sin against science by setting to music ideas that are not emotional enough to prompt musical expression, and they also sin against science by using musical phrases that have no natural relation

to the ideas expressed, even when these are emotional. They are bad because they are untrue, and to say that they are untrue is to say that they are unscientific."

If we weigh the favorite sextet from "Lucia" in these scales, we shall find that it is utterly wanting. But Wagner summed up Herbert Spencer's views in three words, — words which deserve to be emblazoned on the walls of every school of composition, — "*Music is Truth!*"

Judged by this correct standard very much of the music of Rossini, Donizetti, etc., is a lie.

4*th.* Wagner held that mere melody was unnecessary in music. He returned to the melodic recitative in which the first operatic composers had endeavored to imitate the speaking voice with the singing one. Wagner called this recitative the "Melos," and all his later operas are founded upon it. This may be called one of the moot points of the Wagnerian school; it is by no means proven

that music would be advanced by the abolition of symmetrical tune, yet one must warmly defend Wagner from the charge of inability to write direct and comprehensible tunes; his operas up to the time of "Lohengrin" are full of definite melody, and in the later works, notably in "The Master-singers," there are melodies of ineffable beauty.

5th. Wagner did not believe in formality in the treatment of keys. With him the relationship of keys was at any and all times utterly free. He called this freedom of modulation "swimming in a sea of tone," and was able to achieve wonderful effects with it, but lesser composers in imitating this boldness only become vague; they drown in the above mentioned sea!

6th. Wagner believed that if music must be true to poetry, poetry must be true to itself; the librettos were to be worthy of musical setting. In previous times the librettos had often become so absurd that the

French had a saying — "Whatever is too stupid to be spoken may be sung!" Wagner held that a libretto to be worthy of operatic treatment should be able to make its way without music, also; it should be worthy of production as a play. Here again one must pay homage to the reforms of a genius, and Verdi, let him deny the soft impeachment as he will, was obliged to forsake his weak opera librettos because Wagner had brought a purer atmosphere in this field. Some of Wagner's librettos, his own productions, are dramatic gems of the first water.

7th. Wagner employed the orchestra as an important part of the dramatic picture, even as Gluck had done; but he went far beyond Gluck, not only in intensity and power but in causing his orchestra to speak a definite language by means of the *Leit-motif.* This guiding-figure may be defined as a musical figure, sometimes a phrase, which is attached to some person, or thing,

or event, in the opera. Naturally, therefore, it must be expressive in character, and it requires genius to give the cruel character of Hunding, the solemn warning of Lohengrin, the coaxing tenderness of Eva, the imperious power of Siegfried, the mournful foreboding of Fate, in a few notes. The use of a guiding-figure was not the invention of Wagner, but no composer has ever used this device so finely or so freely as he.

As the figure must always be clearly recognized, it being a clue to the action, it cannot be treated so freely as symphonists treat their figures in development; it is generally treated only by transposition and by changing the accompanying harmonies. Even a talented composer might readily become monotonous in employing such a device, but Wagner never approaches prosiness in his repetitions.

The criticaster at once jumps to the conclusion that the *Leit-motif* must be a childish

labelling of the various characters, that Hunding, Siegfried, Elsa, and everybody else go about wearing musical tickets of identification. Never was a more mistaken conclusion! The guiding-figure sometimes allows us to look into the very mind and soul of the characters, and fulfils in the modern opera almost exactly the function of the chorus in the old Greek tragedies; the orchestra is giving a series of comments and explanations to the trained auditor, just as the old chorus-chanters did in the plays of Æschylus, Euripides or Sophocles.

These are not all of the theories of Wagner, for he extended his views as far as the architecture of the theatre and the concealing of the orchestra, but the above are sufficient to show that, while not every jot and tittle may be accepted by posterity, the world may be very grateful for the vast amount of truth forced into a school that was full of error, by Wagner.

The national spirit which permeated most of Wagner's works was an outcome of his theories, and this nationality in music is bringing a new life-blood into modern art, Grieg, Tschaikowsky, Dvorak, and a host of others bringing their native melodies into instrumental and operatic music.

During the early part of Wagner's exile, his loyal friend, Liszt, brought out "Lohengrin" at Weimar. It is almost incredible that all the critics joined in a hue and cry against this opera, finding it unmelodious (!), formless, meaningless, and holding it up as the quintessence of all that is bad in music. Almost every witling in Germany found opportunity to make his little fling at the new work, but Wagner cared little for this; he was already far beyond "Lohengrin" in his pursuit of an operatic ideal, he was beginning the largest work of his life, the vastest musical work ever dreamed of, the trilogy.

The first inception of this was in the opera of "Siegfried," but the story of the Teutonic demigod was not complete, to his mind, without Siegfried's death being also portrayed; after this the composer-poet began to see that the causes which led to Siegfried's career must be shown, and finally he decided to tell with some completeness the entire story of the Ring of the Nibelungs. Never had such a vast work entered into the brain of man! Here we have a wonderful proof of the greatness of Wagner's indomitable nature on the artistic side; it was utterly impossible that any operatic manager would ever accept a work that occupied four nights in its performance, that demanded vocalists that should be of superhuman musical abilities and a stage setting that would seem to require the wealth of a king; yet the composer labored on at the seemingly useless task in obedience to that *must* that whispers its command to genius only. Once he wrote

to a friend the loftiest words ever penned by a musician, — "If I live to complete this work I shall have lived gloriously; if I die before it is done I shall have died for something beautiful!"

But the thought came to him that if he died with his *magnum opus* incomplete the world would never know the entire meaning of his theories. He therefore suspended his labors long enough to write a shorter work which should be quite complete, and should embody in itself all of his theories of the music-drama. "Tristan and Isolde," the first embodiment of all Wagner's theories (1857–59), was the outcome of this idea. As he wanted to make the work as practicable as possible, he scored it for a smaller orchestra than he used in his trilogy, and he made no excessive demands in the matter of stage setting, but in the matter of vocal and orchestral difficulties he placed no restrictions upon himself. The trilogy, with this

and other interruptions, required about twenty-five years for its completion!

In 1861 Wagner gave another proof of his fidelity to his ideals. Princess Metternich took the composer under her protection, and not only obtained permission for Wagner to return to Germany, but managed to get Napoleon III. to produce "Tannhäuser" with all possible splendor at the Grand Opera. In Paris it is the custom to interweave a ballet into each opera, or at the very least to interpolate one between the acts. The *roués* of the Jockey Club, who held many of the ballet dancers under their special protection, demanded their ballet in "Tannhäuser." Wagner replied that a series of tableaux might be introduced into the first act, at the Court of Venus, but nothing else could be permitted.

At the same time Wagner made another heroic sacrifice to his theories. The overture to the opera had been its most suc-

cessful number; its inspiring climax in the triumph of religion, as typified in the apotheosis of the "Pilgrim's Chorus," is one of the supreme moments of the work; but a separate overture did not coincide with the "Theories," and it must therefore be sacrificed. The effective trombone and violin passage was cut out, and in its stead a rather dreary transition into the first scene of the opera was composed, which we are glad to say is seldom played to-day, the world refusing to ride the composer's hobby-horse, and recognizing the grandeur of the original overture.

The Jockey Club was up in arms at the slight put upon its female friends by a mere art-monger, and the three performances of the opera were nothing more than riots, scarcely a note of the music being audible. After these troubles the work was withdrawn, but Wagner had carried his point, there was no ballet introduced.

Meyerbeer would have introduced a fire brigade or a merry-go-round had the Jockey Club demanded it of him.

It became darkest before the dawn. In 1864 even Wagner's undaunted spirit began to give way. He published the libretto of the trilogy with a sad preface, stating that there was no hope of ever bringing the work to completion. Just at that time a king came to his aid. Ludwig II. mounted the throne of Bavaria, and one of his first acts was to invite the composer to come to him that he might finish the great German art-work in comfort. It was Liszt and Ludwig II. of Bavaria who saved Wagner to the world.

All was changed in an instant. Not only comfort but luxury surrounded the composer henceforth. "Tristan and Isolde" was performed under the best conditions June 10, 1865, and the same year, in a charming villa on Lake Luzerne, he set about completing "Die Meistersinger," probably his

best opera, in the mind of the author the best opera of the entire repertoire of the world.

This was no story of gods and demigods, no ponderous national myth, but a delightful tale of human joys and sorrows, a perfect picture of mediæval life, a *sittenbild,* and possessing a libretto (Wagner always wrote his own librettos) equal to the comedies of the great masters of literature. It was in some degree an autobiography, certainly as much so as "David Copperfield" was Dickens's own life-story, Sachs being meant for Liszt, Beckmesser for Hiller, and Walther for Wagner himself. This glorious opera was first produced in Munich June 21, 1868.

In 1870 Wagner married the divorced wife of Von Bülow, Cosima, the illegitimate daughter of Liszt. One cannot place this love-story quite beside the pure tale of Schumann and Clara Wieck, yet there are points of similarity, and as Clara Schumann

devoted her whole long life to making the works of her dead husband known to the world, so Madame Wagner lives to spread the propaganda of the school of the future, the operas of her idolized spouse. If we can set aside the fact that there was much that was illicit in this passion, that the marriage and subsequent happiness was built upon the sorrows of others, then the union was a glorious one. Cosima Wagner worshipped her husband and understood him; she became his inspiration, his true helpmate, and he gave to her as much affection as his art-love had left in his being.

One may study the perfection of the happiness of this pair in the "Siegfried Idylle," a lightly scored but beautiful composition, in which Wagner celebrates his wife and son (Siegfried), and which was written secretly and performed as a birthday surprise to his wife, early one morning, on the staircase of the little villa of Lake Luzerne. One may

study the affection of the wife in the daily events of the last days in Venice,[1] in the loving care with which Wagner's working hours were guarded, in the semi-insanity of grief which followed his death.

And now there came the culmination of the great career; the mighty "Ring of the Nibelungs," the great trilogy, was approaching completion; the king had desired a theatre for the performance in Munich, but Wagner finally decided on Bayreuth for the edifice. Assistance came from all over the world; volunteers for the first performances came by hundreds from the ranks of the very greatest musicians, and in August, 1875, the work which had seemed an impossibility was actually presented, and more wonderful still, it became part of the standard repertoire of all the chief opera-houses of the world within a few years of its first performance at Bayreuth!

[1] Elson's "History of German Song."

There came still another work after the trilogy; in "Parsifal" one finds all the theories of the composer carried out to the fullest extent.

In the autumn of 1882 Wagner and his family went to Venice. As early as the Christmas of that year he seems to have suffered in health, and to have felt some premonition of his death. He died very suddenly at the Palazzo Vendramini, his Venice residence, February 13, 1883.

Whether the world will accept *all* of the theories which Wagner has promulgated and practically carried out in his later operas, may be doubted; melody will possibly hold its own against the freer "Melos" which Wagner believed in. The value of Wagner as a model for future composers may well be minimized; Astyanax cannot be Hector, the thunderbolts of Jove cannot be launched by every mortal. There is, and can be, no Wagner school in music, any more than

there is a Shakespeare school of poets. Wagner stands a monolith; the attempts of young Germany to bring forth more Wagners are leading only to dissonance, vagueness, and a distortion of music from its proper functions.

Yet Wagner has put music on a higher level; operatic works have left the channel of silliness and conventionality in which they were drifting, since his works have cleared the atmosphere; even those who have not copied him, as Verdi, St. Saëns, Gounod, etc., have yet felt his influence. Wagner's combative nature, and his desire to impress his theories, sometimes led him too far (as in the revised "Tannhäuser" music), and the blue pencil is even now being freely employed by earnest Wagner disciples; but after all the subtractions have been made, after all the pedants have had their fling, the greatest musical genius of the last half of the nineteenth century will still be Richard Wagner.

cal student, Brahms speedily becomes the only legitimate successor of Beethoven, the only man who has been able to rival the great symphonist in the domain of development and treatment of large instrumental forms, while in the vocal field Brahms is even Beethoven's superior. Had Brahms had a more chequered career, a fiercer battle with life, his emotional power would have been greater, and he would have been the absolute rival of his great predecessor. Brahms was born at Hamburg, May 7, 1833, and died at Vienna, April 3, 1897. His life is peculiarly scant in those events which seem to garnish the biographies of the great composers; there was little of "Sturm und Drang," little of combat with affliction, it was the life of a student who desired nothing better than to work at his art all his days.

His father was contrabass player at the Hamburg Theatre. His mother is scarcely known to history at all; her maiden name

was Johanna Nissen, and her son loved her tenderly, his greatest work being inspired by his one great life-sorrow, — her death. The chief teacher of the boy was Eduard Marxsen, of Altona, the Hamburg suburb, who laid a splendid classical foundation. At fourteen the lad made a very successful public appearance, but, unspoiled by this, he went into retirement again for five years' further study. When he again appeared, he was a musical giant. He now made a tour with Remenyi, the Hungarian violinist, through some of the German cities. Remenyi has described to the author the first meeting with Liszt. The pair had travelled all day, yet the violinist determined to introduce the young composer to the great pianist at once. Liszt received both very graciously, and soon sat down at the piano to play some of his most recent works ; at the end of a rather long work Liszt turned around, only to behold young Brahms comfortably asleep

in an armchair! The rest of the interview was on a more frigid basis.

But there was another artistic interview soon to follow, which was to bear much greater fruit. At Göttingen the pair gave a concert under difficulties, for when they came to try the piano provided, they found it so low in pitch that Beethoven's great "Kreutzer Sonata," which was on the programme, would have lost all its brilliancy had the violin tuned down to it. Brahms, the youth of nineteen years, thereupon transposed the entire work from A to B flat, playing it from memory! The herculean task had its immediate reward; the greatest living violinist, Joachim, was present, and at once gave the pianist a letter of introduction to Schumann. At Düsseldorf the pair met; Schumann was already in his decadence (this was in October, 1853, only four months before his attempt at suicide), but he was still keenly alive to genius in

others, and, after hearing the lad play, he rushed to seek his Clara, and have her join in his homage to the rising star. He had long since retired from active journalism, but, inspired by the playing of Brahms and the worth of his compositions, he again took up his pen, and wrote an article of the utmost importance. The essay entitled "Neue Bahnen" ("New Paths"), in the "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik," by Schumann, spoke of Brahms as springing full-fledged into the arena of Art, as Minerva sprang from the brain of Jove; it alluded to his sonatas as "veiled symphonies," it spoke of the modesty of the new master, and it gave him the welcome of his comrades at his beginning of the warfare of Art, — "where wounds perhaps may await him, but also laurels."

This article riveted the attention of the entire musical world upon Brahms. Victor Hugo has said, "There is no heavier bur-

den than a great name acquired too soon;" but in the case of this young giant, although the burden may have come very suddenly, it was not too soon. He was not spoiled by the great eulogium, but after a few tours with Joachim and Stockhausen, and a few seasons spent as director at Detmold, we find him again immersing himself in further studies. In 1862 he went to Vienna, where he remained almost constantly until his death. In 1866 his mother died, and he sought refuge from his grief in writing a "German Requiem" (not a requiem mass), which may be regarded as one of the masterpieces of modern times. In his "Song of Destiny," he also showed his power in union of chorus and orchestra. Less successful was the "Song of Triumph," for in this partisan work he celebrates the victory of Germany over France, and the highest forms of art are never found in such sectional music.

In his symphonies Brahms seems to have

been the only composer who was able to give works of long breath such as Beethoven had achieved; he builds in the largest proportions without stumbling or stammering; he was one of the very few who could attain vastness without straining. It was probably this ease in dealing with large proportions that Bülow had in mind when he spoke of the greatest music being summed up in "the three Bs, — Bach, Beethoven, and Brahms!"

Brahms had no theories to promulgate; he gave forth his music and then let it stand for itself. He achieved success in every department of composition, symphony, overture, sonata, song, choral work, chamber music, concerto, etc., etc. He was the greatest leader in the classical advance of our time; he was the most practised, the most thoughtful and learned composer of our epoch.

Whether we enjoy Brahms or not, and there are many who do not grasp his sub-

tility of treatment, we dare not turn aside from his works with sneers such as those which were pointed against Beethoven by the critics quoted at the beginning of this chapter; we must earnestly study what he has to tell us. No man who has studied deeply, and who is entirely in earnest, is unworthy of respectful hearing. If one can cultivate a real appreciation of this composer's work (we may acknowledge that there is some hypocrisy and pseudo-appreciation in the modern concert-room), one is sure of having conquered something of the intellectual side of music. Nor is the emotional side entirely absent, although one may admit that it is not in such equipose with the intellectual as was the case with Beethoven. Much more than Wagner's, the music of Brahms is the "Music of the Future," for it requires much study and pondering; it does not always charm at a single hearing; posterity will do more unanimous

homage than the present to the Browning of Music.

Brahms's personal character was not unlike that of Beethoven; he was arbitrary in musical matters, rough in his ways, furiously severe with any who trifled with music.

The fatal nature of his final disease, cancer of the liver, was well known to the physicians and to a few intimate friends some time before his death, but the secret was so faithfully guarded that the composer knew nothing of it, and worked on calmly until very near his end. This, however, resulted in his leaving no legal will (for not all composers die paupers), and it is dubious if the legacies intended by the composer, to aid indigent musicians, will ever be carried out. But his richest legacy to the world, his lofty compositions, requires no testament to make it effective.

CHAPTER XII.

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

THERE is probably no single biography in music which shows the change that has taken place in operatic composition in our time so graphically as that of Giuseppe Verdi. He began his work on the lines of Rossini and Donizetti, he culminated it on the dramatic principles of Gluck. He emphatically denied that he had in any degree followed Wagner, yet it was probably the example of Wagner which caused him to turn from the silliest librettos to poetic subjects in his operas, from catchy melodies of the whistling order to continuous harmonies and dramatic phrases, from

GIUSEPPE VERDI.

meaningless bravura to earnest portrayal of sentiment.

Verdi was born October 10, 1813 (the same year that witnessed the advent of Wagner into the world), at the little hamlet of Roncole. He was, like Haydn, of the humblest extraction, his birthplace being not much more than a hovel, a little country shop and inn of the most unpretentious kind.

That he had an early love for music is proven by the fact that his father bought him a spinet when the boy was seven years old, and still further by the fact that this spinet was repaired gratis by a tuner named Cavaletti, who was so delighted by the lad's abilities upon the instrument that he offered him this early homage. At the age of ten the boy became organist of the little church at Roncole, not a very important post, as the salary from the second year only amounted to about forty lire — about eight dollars — annually.

Because of his gifts the boy drifted naturally to the neighboring town of Busseto, three miles away. In Busseto he found a devoted friend in Antonio Barezzi.

Barezzi was a man of considerable prominence through all the province, a distiller, and a merchant of considerable means; he was also a lover of music, and made many artists welcome in his hospitable mansion. He took Verdi into his service, and also gave him opportunities to develop the genius which he recognized in the peasant boy. Verdi had a chance to attend the rehearsals of the Philharmonic Society, which took place in Barezzi's house; finally the attention of the leader of the society, who was also organist of the cathedral at Busseto, a good musician named Provesi, was drawn to the lad, and eventually Verdi became his pupil, continuing with the Busseto master until his sixteenth year.

At this time Barezzi obtained a grant of

six hundred lire per annum for two years for the lad who had already shown strong tendencies towards composition. This grant was made by an institution with an especial fund for poor musicians ; to this slim annual income Barezzi added a good sum for tuition and sent Verdi off to the musical centre of Italy — Milan.

Now followed an astonishing blow : Francesco Basily refused to receive him in the Milan Conservatory on the ground that he lacked musical talent ! With Verdi rejected from the Milan Conservatory, and Liszt and Rubinstein turned away from the Paris Conservatoire, one may consider conservatories as often too conservative. After this rebuff Verdi went to Lavigna in Milan, who became his first real instructor in the intricacies of composition. There are many anecdotes, probably false, regarding the phenomenal ability which the young Verdi displayed in counterpoint at this time, one authority

going so far as to say that the young man improvised a double canon on a theme given him by Lavigna at his first visit to that teacher. When it is borne in mind that even in his great Requiem Verdi evaded sustained contrapuntal work, and that the finale of "Falstaff" is the greatest height in counterpoint that he ever attained, such biographical fictions may be dismissed with short shrift. But that Verdi soon began to write boldly is incontestable. Before his public career had fairly begun Barezzi gave Verdi a proof of his friendship by allowing the penniless youth to wed his daughter. Verdi was at this time twenty-two years of age. He very soon set out for Milan again, and here he at once made another warm friend in Merelli, the manager of La Scala, the great opera house of the city.

Merelli produced Verdi's first opera, "Oberto di San Bonifacio," at La Scala, November 17, 1839. It will be seen that Verdi

was not a precocity in composition, for at the time that his first opera was completed he was twenty-six years old. The opera was successful and Merelli entered into a contract with Verdi for further works. The next opera was a comic one, "Un Giorno di Regno," and never was a comic opera written under such mournful and tragic circumstances: the composer's entire family, wife, son, and daughter, died within a few days of each other. The comic opera was produced and made an absolute failure; not until more than a half century later did Verdi attempt another in his "Falstaff."

In these dark days Merelli stood by Verdi grandly. He was rewarded for his loyalty, for the next opera which Verdi gave to him was a tremendous popular success; it was "Nabucco," performed March 9, 1842, and with this opera Verdi's actual public career commenced. After this success followed success. The soprano who helped the success

of "Nabucco," Giuseppina Strepponi, afterwards became Verdi's second wife. She died in 1898.

After his next opera — "I Lombardi" — Verdi had Italy secure. He became its most popular composer. At this time, however, he was content to win his public by any and all means, *à la* Meyerbeer; his librettos were produced by a literary hack, a veritable slave to Verdi, named Solera, and Solera's successor to the post of Verdi's literary purveyor was kept in the same debased condition. Verdi was, at this time, high tempered, coarse and uneducated, and regarded his operatic books merely as pegs whereon to hang his melodies; the more honor to him that he finally saw the error of this *mésalliance* of poetry and music, and in his later operas called true poets to his aid.

To illustrate the carelessness he displayed regarding his plots it may be stated that, when he wrote "Un Ballo in Maschera" for Naples,

the police forbade the performance, since a king was assassinated in the ball scene, which might be an incital to the Neapolitans to go and do likewise; Verdi nonchalantly commanded his librettist to change the king into the Duke of Mantua, which was done. The police were still dissatisfied, whereupon Verdi caused his poetaster to change the whole affair to America; eventually it was the "Governor of Boston" (!!) who was murdered, at a masked ball, probably given by the Puritans in the old Province House! When Mario, the handsome tenor, found the Puritan garb too plain to display his charms, Verdi said, "Dress it as you please," wherefore the Governor of Calvinistic Boston danced his sprightliest in the full costume of a Spanish cavalier! If one contrasts this with the Wagnerian strivings after dramatic unity, the width of the gulf between the schools will be appreciated.

Verdi was fortunate at this time in curry-

ing political favor with the young Italian patriots. In the Austrian provinces of Italy it was treason for advocates of United Italy to shout for Victor Emmanuel, but in a short time all these lovers of liberty were crying, "Viva Verdi!" The key to this puzzle is to be found in the separate letters of the composer's name. "Viva Verdi" really meant "Viva Vittore Emmanuele, Re D'Italia!"

Verdi, in this early period, tried his hand at setting Shakespeare to music, but in a very different manner from the later settings, when in "Othello" and "Falstaff" he drew the best Italian Shakesperian, Böito, to his aid. Imagine Macduff singing a liberty aria, with such words as, —

> "Our country forsaken
> Our tears should awaken,
> 'Gainst tyrants' oppression
> Our spirits shall rise."

The bard of Avon was unrecognizable, but the audience easily recognized the patri-

otic sentiment, and joined so vociferously in the chorus that the police soon took a hand in the proceedings.

In 1849 Verdi seemed to enter upon a new period of growth. Such operas as "La Traviata" or "Rigoletto" may be classed as a second period in the development of the composer. The orchestra begins to have more significance than a mere accompaniment, and, occasionally, one finds touches of high dramatic power. The quartette in "Rigoletto," for example, can be judged by the highest standards of dramatic art, and it will not be found wanting. The temptation in Verdi's path may be clearly shown by the statement that the Italian public cared less for this great number than for the vapid tenor solo, "La Donna e Mobile," and Verdi knew perfectly well beforehand that this would be the case, keeping the melody profoundly secret from everybody but the tenor, and playing it as

his trump card at the performance. "La Traviata" began with a semi-failure from a physical cause. It may be borne in mind that here the heroine (actually Dumas's "Camille") dies of consumption. It is rather difficult to obtain an opera singer who looks near to death from this cause. Verdi had proceeded with his usual carelessness in the matter, and when the doctor, in the last act, said of the prima donna of two hundred and fifty pounds, "In a few short hours she will be dead of consumption!" the house began to reëcho to shouts of laughter, and the performance ended in hilarity.

Verdi was, however, now world-famous; operas for Paris, for Russia, for Egypt, were ordered in quick succession. And now the composer began to show the stamina that was in him; he drew towards a loftier, more truly dramatic style of expression. This third period shows its dawn in "Don Carlos," but it shines forth in its full glory in

"Aida," written at the command of the Khedive of Egypt for the opening of the Grand Opera House at Cairo, December 24, 1871. Here we find a true wedding of text and tones, sustained dramatic power, noble orchestration, in short everything that distinguishes the great Verdi of the third period from the paltry Verdi of his first period. In 1874 the Manzoni Requiem proved that there was to be no recession, for it is a work full of power and beauty.

In 1887 the septuagenarian brought forth his greatest work, this time a Shakesperian setting that intensified instead of perverted the great poet. The librettist, Arrigo Böito, must share in this triumph, for he gave to Verdi a libretto that awakens enthusiasm. At more than eighty years of age the composer, still showing no signs of decay, brought forth his second comic opera, "Falstaff," a fine work, yet not to be ranked with "Othello" or "Aida" in power.

In "Falstaff" and "Othello" Verdi has left the domain of pretty melody altogether; the continuity of the modern school is in these two operas, and the music is dramatic rather than merely tuneful. "Falstaff" was his last opera; he died, soon after this triumph of his old age, at Milan, Jan. 27, 1901.

One must pay homage to Verdi for changing of his own accord from a meretricious style to an earnest one. This change has been acknowledged by even the severest critics. Von Bülow, who began by despising Verdi, ended by honoring him, and all Germany has followed his example. Italy bows to Verdi as the founder of a newer and purer school of Italian opera; thus Verdi has become a great leader in the modern musical advance; beginning by writing down to his public, he ended by drawing his public upward to a higher domain of art, and by arresting the decay which seemed to have settled like a blight upon the opera in Italy.

CHAPTER XIII.

OTHER INFLUENCES IN MODERN MUSIC.

HECTOR BERLIOZ.

We have already reviewed the line of operatic composers in France, but it is due to that country to speak of the orchestral development which has been a growth of its most modern epoch. This orchestral school which has brought forth such men as Saint Saëns, Massenet, Franck (who has done good service in other directions as well), Bizet, and many others, had its real beginning in the orchestral scores of Berlioz. Although Berlioz has composed opera, oratorio, cantata, and other choral works, it is by his wonderful skill and brilliancy in scoring that he has influenced not only the

orchestral music of France, but of the entire world.

Hector Berlioz was born at Côte St. André, December 11, 1803. He was the son of a physician who was an opium eater, and much that was unbalanced and morbid in the son may be traced to this vice of the parent. Amid many trials and privations he studied at the Paris Conservatoire, not the least of these trials being the fixed enmity of Cherubini, whose classical style was entirely antagonistic to the fierce and dramatic school of the young composer. He was deemed unfit even to compete for the *Prix de Rome*, and this denial caused the father to call him back from Paris to his country home. Such deep dejection followed the return, however, that the anxious father permitted his second departure for Paris and a musical career.

In Paris he saw a beautiful Irish actress, a Miss Harriet Smithson, who was perform-

ing Shakespearian plays in the French metropolis, and at once fell in love with her. It was a long time before the poverty-stricken young composer could bring himself to the notice of the successful actress, but he eventually succeeded. The great "Symphonie Fantastique" was the love-letter which eventually caused her to understand the passion that she had inspired. The "Romeo and Juliet" symphony is another outcome of the episode. The pair were eventually married; it is a pity that one cannot add, "They lived happily ever afterwards," but the truth must be told that it was a very unhappy union. The actress met with an accident that caused her to withdraw from the stage, she was utterly unable to become a helpmate to the struggling composer, she eventually took to drink, and a separation ensued. Berlioz subsequently married a Mlle. Recio, a singer with a small voice and a large conceit, and outlived her, the

second mother-in-law taking care of him after her daughter's death. Berlioz had one son, Louis, by his first marriage, who died in young manhood.

Berlioz was a man who was not daunted by obstacles; he was a born fighter, as it is necessary for a pioneer and reformer to be. After the denial of the right to compete for the great prize of the Institute, mentioned above, he entered the lists four times more, and finally won the coveted reward.

His "Symphonie Fantastique" not only won him his wife, but a strange pecuniary reward as well. The work was given under the direction of the composer in Paris, when, at the close of the performance, a weird-looking man sprang upon the platform, kissed the composer's hand, and rushed away. The next day there came a letter from the unknown, who proved to be the great Paganini, the king of all violinists, enclosing 20,000 francs as a token of his appreciation of the

composer's merit. Paganini was such an arrant miser during all his life that some French biographers believe that he was only the agent of some wealthy admirer of Berlioz who desired to keep himself in the background, but one can well believe that this morbid symphony would pull at the heart-strings of the dark and sinister Paganini.

Berlioz was denounced by all the musical critics of his day in Paris; he himself was a musical critic and reviewer, and this added fuel to the flame, for brotherly love is very seldom found among reviewers in the musical field. He once took a very ingenious revenge upon his antagonistic reviewers. In his delvings among old libraries he came across an old work, probably of the seventeenth century, "L'Enfance du Christ," by an unknown composer, — Pere Ducré. He caused this to be performed; all the critics of Paris burst forth in eulogy of the composition, and some ventured to tell Berlioz that

he had better leave his sensationalism, and study the pages of this same Pere Ducré! Then came the bombshell! Berlioz suddenly retorted with the statement that *there was no Pere Ducré!* He proved that he himself had written the work in question, and had turned the tables upon his adversaries by one of the neatest of practical jokes! They did not cherish him any the more because of this.

But there was and is some truth in the attacks made upon Berlioz; he is morbid and sensational in most of his work; he may be called the Edgar Allen Poe of Music, yet his management of the orchestra was marvellous, and he may be regarded as the first Frenchman who thoroughly developed orchestral resources. Sometimes his effects were in the nature of experiments, and often his music was affectedly intricate. Wagner said of him, "He ciphers with notes;" but he was none the less the pioneer of a new school.

His works were in almost every branch of composition. Probably the great effort of his life was made in an opera — "Les Troyens" — which has never had a fair hearing, the performances of Wagner's "Tannhäuser" in Paris, already described, preventing its intended launching. His Requiem may be regarded as the most ambitious score (in number of parts and instruments employed) in existence. His "Damnation of Faust" is a work full of beauty and *diablerie* in about equal proportions. His symphonies are not in the accustomed form, but are marvels of orchestration. It is on the orchestral side that Berlioz wins the admiration of the critic, he is the tone-colorist *par excellence*, the Titian of music. He has used programme music in symphony more than any other composer. He won many honors in Germany, Austria, and Russia, but the French were too new to orchestral devices

to understand their compatriot during his lifetime. Berlioz died March 8, 1869.

ROBERT FRANZ.

There could be no wider contrast in musical biography than that afforded by the life of Franz as against such a career as the one just described; the one all frenzied and sensational, the other calm and serene; the one pressing forward towards new fields, the other resting tranquilly upon the old masters. In one respect the art career of Franz may be compared with that of Chopin, — he achieved all his fame in a single field of composition. Chopin's renown rests wholly upon his piano compositions; Franz's fame is built entirely upon his songs. Franz was the legitimate successor of Schubert and Schumann in the field of *lieder*. His nature was so retiring, his life so quiet, his works in such a small form, that the world does not even now comprehend what a master

Robert Franz was. He was born June 28, 1815, at Halle, the German university town, a pious and quiet old city which possibly moulded the quiet nature of the musician. He appreciated music at two years of age, for he has assured the author of his recollecting a chorale which he heard in his nurse's arms. The music in the family was of the religious type, the father singing chorales every evening, to the great delight of his musical son. The boy was threatened with a flogging at school for constantly improvising an alto part to the melodies which the pupils sang in unison, the teacher not comprehending any deviation from the printed copy.

Franz picked up sufficient organ-playing in his home to attempt an occasional chorale accompaniment in church, and, as a boy, used to run from church to church in Halle in the hope of substituting, gratis, for the organist, during the congregational singing.

His father was opposed to his taking up a musical career, but when the crucial time arrived his mother stood his staunch friend, and at twenty he left Halle for Dessau, where he studied under Schneider. He was nurtured in the good old school of the Chorales, of Bach, and of the classical masters. He returned to Halle a most unpractical youth, seemingly unable to make his way in any path, not technically able to appear as a public performer, spending nights and days in the study of the old Italian and German composers and the works of Schubert, whom he loved dearly.

Six years of aimless waiting ensued, during which Franz composed song after song only to lock each one up in his desk after completion. At last, in 1843, he determined to publish something. Twelve songs were selected from his pile of manuscripts. Through Schumann these found an imme-

diate recognition and a publisher. Never was such an Opus 1; Liszt, Schumann, and other critics sang the praises of the new sunburst royally.

A position came in the train of these *Lieder*, and Franz was made director of the Sing-Akademie of his town. Here he lived in absolute retirement all his days. He loved to fill out the skeleton scores of the old masters with the necessary additional accompaniments, a labor of self-abnegation for which he has not received due credit, some reviewers even blaming the modest master with filling in appropriate counterpoint where the sparsely orchestrated works of Bach and Händel required it.

Franz married a musical wife, Marie Hinrichs, who also has given forth some worthy compositions. Gradually poverty settled down upon the modest household, and at this juncture an alarming deafness came upon the composer so that he was

obliged to give up his directorship; the wolf was at the door. Fortunately in this case we are spared the necessity of telling a tale of starvation and pauperism, such as has been narrated of more than one master in these pages; Liszt came to the rescue. In 1868 "Franz Concerts" were given in all the great cities of the world, even Boston sending a large sum to the fund which resulted. The composer was lifted above all reach of poverty, and was placed permanently in comfortable circumstances.

He went on pouring forth *Lieder* to the end of his days. To a letter in which the author ventured to complain that one of the greatest modern contrapuntists should only leave small works behind him, Franz replied that he felt that there was no room in the large forms after Beethoven.

He remained a musical Meissonier to his death. But his songs are models of what this form should be. In a letter to the

author, regarding these, Franz wrote (in 1889) the following remarkable words:

"There is, I am afraid, a subtler comprehension of music necessary than that possessed by the average, to discover the different phases of my musical expression.

"One of the most characteristic points in the matter is that I do not *make* music to the text chosen, but allow the music to develop itself from the words. Two verses of a Heine poem run:

"'If your eyes are keen and bright
And upon my songs you ponder,
You will see a fair, young maid
Lightly through the verses wander.

"'If your ears are very sharp
You will hear her sweet voice calling,
And her laughing, sighing, singing,
Soon shall be your heart enthralling.'

"Instinctively I gave my adhesion to this guidance of Heine, and was led to it the more by the conviction that there are more close and secret connections existing between poetry and music than the narrow mind comprehends. 'Every truly lyrical poem holds latent within itself its own melody.'"

In a later letter he says:

"That you do justice to the power of the *Lied* gives me great pleasure. Until now many have looked upon this form with a compassionate shrug of the shoulders, and yet there rests upon it one of the chief factors of music. As regards myself, I do not for a moment regret that I have followed this command of my nature exclusively, and have brought the form into honor, along with my predecessors. Music began with the lyric, and ends with it, a process of development that is true of poetry also."

In 1891 there comes a letter that is full of premonition. Franz had promised an autobiography, but writes:

"I cannot do it; head and hand are in too pitiable a condition for me to attempt anything connected with a personal description."

Franz had at this time written about three hundred songs, each a gem in its way, songs that find their equals only in the works of Schubert or of Schumann.

The world will yet come to appreciate the

fact that Robert Franz was a genius, one of the great triumvirate of *Lied*-composers.

Soon after the last letter, October 24, 1892, there came the end; but if goodness of life and truth to an ideal, if self-abnegation and lofty purpose through a long career mean anything, the end was but the beginning.

MODERN SCHOOLS OF COMPOSITION.

There are many composers of the present era and of the recent past, who, while falling short of the rank of absolute genius, are yet exerting an influence upon the direction of the modern school of music. It would be impossible to mention each of these in detail, yet a short account of the schools of national music which they furthered may best conclude our sketches of musical matters.

In Bohemia, where, after the fearful ravages of the thirty years' war, art lay prostrate, a musical pioneer named Smetana (born 1824, died, insane, in 1884) arose, and

began a school of composition that was permeated with the true spirit of his native land. He had a pupil who carried this national idea still further; this was Antonin Dvorak, born September 8, 1841. Like his teacher, Smetana, Dvorak built most of his music upon the rock of folk-song. This composer became an important factor in the development of American music, not only by using some of our Southern folk-themes in symphony and in chamber music, but by teaching composition in this country for some time. His chief works are a "Stabat Mater," a Requiem, a set of symphonies, and the "Spectre's Bride." He died at Prague, May 1, 1904.

In Russia an important school of modern orchestral music has arisen, and it is probable that the Russia of the near future may become the leading country of the world in some branches of music. Russia has a glorious wealth of folk-music to draw upon, and its first great composer, Glinka (1804–1857),

in his operas, "Life for the Czar" and "Ruslan and Ludmilla," proved what beauty exists in the folk-songs of the land of the Czar. But the later composers, Borodin, Cui, Rimski-Korsakoff, etc., have turned to the modern orchestra with avidity, and have shown themselves strongly influenced by the style of Berlioz, Liszt, and Wagner. Among these one figure stands preëminent in orchestral writing (his operas are not yet known in America):

PETER ILIITSCH TSCHAIKOWSKY.

This great composer was born in 1840, and died in 1894. He was gloriously national in his music; in symphony, in overture, in chamber music, in almost every domain of music, Tschaikowsky has shown us what the Russian school has to say when to the knowledge of Muscovite melodies is added the skill of a great composer. Tschaikowsky's last great work was the "Pathetic

Symphony," which is a threnody of great power. Its mournful character has caused the wretched musical sentimentalist to wreathe a story around its measures; it is stated by some writers that Tschaikowsky wrote this in anticipation of his own death, and then committed suicide. There is not a word of truth in this; the composer died of ptomaine poisoning. During the cholera season in St. Petersburg, when all the water was more or less contaminated, he ventured to drink a glass of unfiltered water, and very soon thereafter was taken ill with all the symptoms of cholera. There are so many details of the last illness given in the Russian press that the story of suicide is utterly annihilated.

In France Massenet to-day shares with Saint Saëns the sceptre of orchestral power. Yet Massenet has never risen to the height of his competitor in purely orchestral music. His tendency is rather towards the operatic

vein, and in this, especially in his "Manon," he is the superior of Saint Saëns.

Even Italy, which has hitherto devoted itself almost exclusively to the vocal side of music, is now coming into the orchestral lines, and Sgambati has made the first Italian efforts in the large orchestral forms, while Mascagni also shows an appreciation of the power of modern instrumentation.

Scandinavia has an important message to give to the world in music, for the folk-music of Norway and Sweden is scarcely less varied and expressive than that of Russia, and such composers as Grieg, Svendsen, or Lindblad have brought this new flavor into modern composition with great success.

England has scarcely shared in the modern activity; her golden epoch was in the sixteenth century. The world is constantly vaunting the Elizabethan poets but has done very scant justice to the Elizabethan contrapuntists. The madrigals of Weelkes,

Wilbye, Farrant, Morley, the anthems which were brought forth by these and other composers at this epoch and are still the glory of the Episcopal Church, place the England of 1550–1625 abreast of any musical nation of its time, even though no Palestrina or Di Lasso appeared. The musical genius of England, Purcell, appeared later. In the present day England presents an Irishman and a semi-German as her chief composers, Dr. Villiers Stanford and F. H. Cowen being her chief symphonic composers, although Macfarren and Sullivan have achieved successes in other fields of composition. The latter, Sir Arthur Sullivan, when studying at Leipzig was believed by his teachers to be destined to become England's greatest composer. He might indeed have become so but for the fact that the comic opera muse soon claimed him, and forbade him the highest fame while filling his pocketbook beyond the usual lot of composers. No

man can serve two masters. Sullivan has fallen short of true greatness in his grand opera, his oratorio, and his cantata work, but he deserves the thanks of the world for elevating comic opera above the indelicate level where the French composers had placed it. Many other composers of merit might be named in connection with England's recent musical history, — Mackenzie, Parry, Doctor Bridge, Barnby, and many other names might be cited to show that the mother country is not idle in art, and a decidedly higher standard has been established than was the case when William Sterndale Bennet, or Balfe, or William Vincent Wallace, or Bishop, ruled British music.

In Germany there seems to be a momentary retrogression caused by an attempt to out-Wagner Wagner, and while such composers as Raff (1822–1882), Rheinberger, and, in Austria, Goldmark, are upholding

form and intelligible harmony as well as melody, a misguided genius, Richard Strauss, is leading his muse through the brambles instead of along the highroad of art, and he, in turn, has many imitators who have not his great orchestral power; thus music, too, is beginning to have its Maeterlincks, its impressionist school, and there are not wanting virulent attacks on symphony, sonata, on everything that has form or symmetrical architecture.

It would be impossible in a work of this brief description to do justice to the musical advance that has taken place in America. The wonderful strides that have been made in painting and in literature in America have been duplicated in music; a land which a half century ago had no composers now possesses a number of men (and even a few women) who can do creditable work in the largest musical forms. American compositions begin to take their place upon

European concert programmes, and the highest standard is being rapidly attained.

From the study of the past one can in some degree prophesy the future. After becoming exhausted in pursuing the Wagner will-o'-the-wisp, the great composers will return to a more melodic, a more symmetrical basis. They will not recede from the wonderful orchestration which Wagner, Berlioz, Richard Strauss, and others have established, but they will combine with it something of the purer classical school, so that, while the composer of the future may possess the passion of the present school, he will also combine with it something of the limpid purity and melody of a Mozart, the figure treatment of a Beethoven, and the contrapuntal ease of a Bach.

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